

The Barnes Foundation

Journal of the Art Department

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Journal of the Art Department

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The essays, etc., appearing in the issues of this JOURNAL will, for the most part, be derived from the work of seminar students, alumni, and members of the staff of the Foundation Art Department. On occasion, articles and pieces will be published not directly concerned with the Foundation's philosophy but representing original work by the Art Department's students and outside contributors which the editorial staff considers to be of general interest to the JOURNAL's readers. Publication occurs twice a year.



The Seminar Room of the Art Department

JOURNAL *of* THE ART DEPARTMENT

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*E Pluribus Unum—Cont'd**

by VIOLETTE DE MAZIA**

II. FURTHER INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS

THE intent of our essay in the preceding issue of the JOURNAL† was to confirm not merely the existence of unity and variety in daily happenings, but also the fact that these two conditions are intrinsic to the continuity of our life on earth. We plan now to extend our observations along this line of thought and later to follow the parallel, in terms of both occurrence and significance, that is to be noted between the varied unity among a set of units appearing in a selected group of paintings—such as the pictured trees in works by Renoir, Cézanne, Matisse, Mark and Corot that we traced in the study referred to above—and the varied unity to be found in the space-volume organization of a single work of art—*viz.*, Cézanne's "Man and Skull" (Fold-out Plate 67).

* Some of the ideas developed in this essay were originally presented in class lectures. The article is the second of a series on the general topic of Unity and Variety.

** Director of Education.

† Violette de Mazia, "*E Pluribus Unum: I. Preamble*," *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department*, Vol. VII, No. 1, (Spring, 1976), The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., pp. 3–34.

As a basis to the present continued development of our thesis and to our subsequent consideration of unity and variety in "Man and Skull," we might recall some of the key points of our prior discussion of the topic. (1) Repetition that makes for organic unity involves not superficial, but essential, elements—essential, that is, with regard to the interest governing identity and meaning (see Plate 1); essential elements are those that impart specific identity to all members of a unified group. (2) When variety surpasses unity, the latter vanishes and inconsistency or chaos takes over (see Plate 2); when unity is insufficiently activated by variety, monotony prevails. (3) In amicable relationship to each other—each one emphatic yet controlled in its action—unity and variety are potentially of an aesthetic nature.

A further important aspect of unity as a feature of situations and objects that often escapes the student is that unity, and the consequent identity and meaning of variety, is *always* related to a particular point of consideration or interest. For example, all of our first-year students come to the Foundation on Tuesday afternoons and remain more or less awake and attentive. The repetition of those factors unifies them in the category of "members of the Tuesday class at The Barnes Foundation." And, yet, the so-well unified group from that particular point of consideration would show no unity at all if considered, for instance, from the point of view of a football team. For what that requires in terms of common essentials, the class members are, I am sorry to say, full of shortcomings.

By the same token, and of prime importance in our study of art, it follows that, when we consider order or unity in a work of art, we must make sure that we consider it with reference to art's interest. This means, of course, that unity is a function of all aspects of what makes a unit, an area, a brush stroke part of an aesthetic entity, a painting. Thus, although in Cézanne's "Pears on Chair" (Plate 3), for instance, the units unify with each other from the point of view of subject—pieces of fruit on a chair—from the point of view of art's demands, the dull, lightless red patch on the pear at the center foreground is a break in the con-

tinuity of the light-within-color qualities of the picture as a whole and flattens the volume of the object to which it belongs. While the color elsewhere on the canvas is internally illuminated and enlivened by a deep, though muted, glow and acts to build up the three-dimensional structure of the units, the red patch remains as red paint on the area's surface, and the degree of variety it introduces reaches beyond what the rest of the painting requires. The same general observation can be made about Manet's "The Wash" (Plate 60). Although there are enough essentials in common among all the picture units to have them unify on the basis of subject—the scene is out-of-doors; there is wash on the line; the woman is laundering at the washtub; and the child looks on—with regard to the color quality, a number of units are found wanting—the red flower, just below the chair leg immediately right of center, talks too loudly as red pigment and remains unrelated to its subtly vibrating surroundings; and some of the green foliage is too dull in the overall context. On the other hand, the units in Cézanne's "Fruit and Ginger Jar" (Plate 35) do not unify in terms of subject. While, for example, the ginger jar appears to obey the law of gravity, the tilted pear at the right edge of the table could not, in nature, maintain the position shown, leaning as it looks to be doing over a bottomless abyss. At the same time, there are, with reference to the picture identity, sufficient essential characteristics shared by all the units to bring about unity from the point of view of art's interest. Note, for instance, the skewer* sequence of the tilted pear's highlight, the slanting light on the piece of fruit in front of it and the plunging outline of the foreground cloth, all of which form the lower right side of a comprehensive diamond-shaped organization, with the jar's handle and the counterbalancing corresponding shape at the right establishing the upright angle of the diamond in which the tilted pear is involved and to which it contributes.

There is still another important aspect of unity in its relationship to variety that we have touched upon between the

* For a discussion of the term skewer as it applies to works of art, see the Spring, 1976, issue of the JOURNAL, pp. 5–6 ftn.

lines but should now make explicit. It is that we are so constituted that, for the most part, given an occurrence of interest, of significance, we tend to desire, to look forward to, to be pleased by a recurrence of it, sometimes even to the extent of being reluctant to let it go for a possibly more worthwhile occurrence. This happens frequently because of the satisfaction inherent in experiencing again what we have already experienced: the repetition, the recurrence, permits recognition; it provides a sense of familiarity and continuity with the past; that is, it provides a sense of order, and order in general facilitates living.

In what we call the pattern of our daily living, there are numerous instances of repetition with variation affecting us and regulating, ordering, our lives. The sun rises and sets, it did so yesterday and today, and it is expected to do so again tomorrow and the days after. And, because we feel we can bank on the recurrences, we plan accordingly. Similarly with the seasons, winter, spring, summer and autumn will recur more or less as they have occurred. Or, with the average day's living, we get up, do some work, have some fun, take in food, go to sleep, and we expect that tomorrow we shall also get up, be active, satisfy our hunger and again go to rest and sleep. Indeed, we expect to do those things for so long as what we know as that sort of life continues, and, in the fact that we can, we find comfort: it—that “daily life”—is of *that* sort; it has *that* character or pattern for us. That is to say, we can grasp its identity precisely because of the recurrence of its essential features.

Variety is, of course, an intrinsic feature of such patterns or order. The sun that never fails to rise and to set rose at six o'clock yesterday and at five fifty-seven today, and one day it stays up longer than it did on the preceding day. Some days it is red, bright and hot, and on others it is pale yellow, dim and relatively cool. Still, with all the variety in how it occurs, what is essential does not fail to recur: the sun does not neglect to rise, to set and to illuminate and warm up the earth and to supply us with vitamin D. In short, what gives the sun its meaning from the point of view of life on earth recurs. Suppose, however, that whoever or whatever regulates the solar system plays a nasty joke and one day sends

up, instead of the sun, a red balloon or a big Japanese lantern, duplicating the sun's size, shape, color, time of appearance and descent and apparent trajectory. Obviously, the continuity of life as we know it would be broken because what is made to recur does not represent what is essential to the significance of the sun from the point of view of possible life on our planet. Then, too, the heart, with its systolic and diastolic pumping, propels the blood into arteries. We run or are emotionally excited, and the pumping accelerates to one hundred beats a minute. We relax, and it slows down to a normal seventy-eight or so. But the essential activity, the pumping, does not stop so long as life in our body as we know it goes on. Or, again, we have three meals a day. But, although we may love a thick, juicy steak, do we therefore have it morning, noon and night or day after day? Rather, we enjoy it when we have it because we have not had it for a time. Yet we have had food, though it be something else than steak. Likewise, we do our bit of work every day, but as we know, "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

All this is by way of re-illustrating and re-asserting the fact that both unity and variety, each undergoing the effect of the other, are fundamental to life and that they can in themselves afford a sense of satisfaction. Why, then, the question might be raised, do human beings break unity, or order, and fight each other, go to war? War, it is true, does disrupt order and unity, but the incentive for it, however misguided that incentive may be, is to establish a new, commendable or not, order.

Life, as Heraclitus said centuries ago, is a flux. In other words, it is a matter of changing continuity, of fluctuating meaning against continuing meaning, *i.e.*, variety against order and unity. And that state of affairs is so constant a feature of our lives that, given a thing, an event, an occurrence, a stimulus of value or interest—a unit in a painting is a visual such occurrence—it is natural for us to desire, to look for, to anticipate its recurrence, but with something new yet akin to what we have had and already know. The large, intensely-lighted area of the monk's robe in El Greco's "Vision of St. Hyacinth" (Plate 46), for instance, sends us readily to the

shimmer of light in the unit of the Madonna and Child, from there to the dimly illuminated figure in the niche at the upper right and then, very likely, to the still more subdued light of the floor at the lower left—all by way of the recurrence of light, although each occurrence differs in some fashion from the others.

Although the significance of unity and variety and of their relationship to each other is of the same general sort in everyday occurrences and works of art, there is an important difference between our response, from the point of view of unity and variety, to situations of nature, *i.e.*, those not of man's making—the sun, the seasons, the human race, the actual landscape and trees—and to situations brought about by man, including those produced by the artist. With regard to what nature offers, we cannot possibly grasp, experience, know the boundaries in space and time: the beginning and end of nature's situations and happenings escape us; they pass the limits of human understanding; they are out of our reach. We can enjoy in them a varied unity of a sort, insofar as and because we tend to perceive in terms of closed patterns, which we impose upon nature's offerings, but we miss the kind of satisfaction we get when we can, when we are given the chance to, grasp, physically or intellectually, the complete identity of things and happenings. Furthermore, with nature's situations we miss also the possibility of understanding them on the basis of an overall intent. We suspect, we take on faith, we hope that there is an ultimate purpose that regulates everything and that gives it a specific significance, but we do not know that purpose and are ever unable to conceive what it might be. The awareness of the fact that nature's design is out of our ken causes us to be perplexed and not at ease and, because of that, frustrated. And frustration, never pleasant in itself, is not of an aesthetic character. Thus, we find people turning to science, metaphysics, religion or even to drink and drugs in an attempt to diminish or counter the sense of frustration.

A corresponding sense of frustration from the standpoint of aesthetic interest is created by entering a movie house after the film is well under way and leaving before the end

or by responding to certain pictures wherein what goes on is presented as if it had started and will be continued outside the boundaries of the canvas—such as, for example, Arthur Carles' "Abstraction" (Plate 4).^{*} In these we miss much of the meaning of what we do see because we miss the overall idea that might have assigned a more precise function and significance to the observable parts. We feel, that is, a sense of frustration because the films, the paintings fail to satisfy in the way that films and pictures can and nature does not. They do not supply the key to a guiding theme to which we could refer the portions seen in order to establish their specific identity. Unity of a sort by way of repetition and correlation of effects may prevail, as it does in a checkerboard or in a bolt of patterned fabric, but not structural oneness by organic containment. Rather, it results from mere physical boundaries, beyond which the situation perforce ceases to exist.

The pleasure we take in comprehending situations and things completely is perhaps exemplified clearly by the special case of the person who has a passion for collecting. What moves him, in part, is an almost instinctive impulse or need to grasp entities, to get hold of them in their entirety, to own, so to speak, their meanings. If his interest is stamps, say, or antique chinaware, he is driven to re-establish a complete set of what is no longer available as such, even when such an accomplishment is well-nigh impossible. He buys a cup and saucer in a certain pattern; more fun and excitement come as he hunts and finds, at his price, the second cup and saucer, the third, the fourth; and what a thrill it is when he reaches the set of six. Then a kind friend gives him a present of another cup and saucer in the same pattern, and . . . it is almost as if a wet blanket had been thrown over him. His set is no longer a set; it has loose, open ends, and he cannot rest until he gets the eighth, ninth and up to the twelfth cup and saucer—if, that is, he has really been bitten by the bug for which there is no vac-

^{*} For other examples of this type of design—what the painter Arthur B. Davies called a "continuous composition"—see the Spring, 1973, issue of the *JOURNAL*, Plates 13 and 14.

cine except going broke. In Manet's "The Old Musician" (Plate 24), there is a balance of equivalents, a "set," in the mass organization of the five main figures—the old man counterbalancing the pair of children, and the standing man in top hat at the right acting as the compositional equivalent of the combined unit of dark foliage and barefoot girl at the left. But the sixth figure entering the picture at the extreme right, while participating effectively in and bringing to a close the back-and-forth, accordion-pleat sequence of the figures across the picture, somewhat over-compensates for the foliage and barefoot girl and, in a hypercritical view, could be considered the cup and saucer which the friend brings: it is not entirely resolved in terms of the total organization of the volumes and starts something on its own that needs completion. The composition becomes uncontained, spilling, so to speak, over the picture boundary at the right. A variant of the uncontained statement is to be found in Juan Gris' "Guitar and Glasses" (Plate 6) and Phil Paradise's "March Wind" (Plate 5), in both of which a central unit—the strings and neck of the guitar in the Gris and a tree in the Paradise—simultaneously attaches the two halves of the painting to each other, bringing them together, and also separates them, diverting our attention and starting the composition going to the right and to the left, with open ends at the sides, as if it were to be concluded in a next installment, never-to-be-had because the publishers have gone out of business.* The result here again is unsatisfying and frustrating, for we are left up in the air in a state of expectation unresolved.

Specific relationships among all the characteristics of the component factors, and not solely in their placement, are, of course, responsible for the open-end effect. For instance, in contrast to the Paradise and Gris pictures mentioned above, in Klee's "Sicilian Landscape" (Plate 30), although one

* The large triangular shape in the Gris, suggesting a part of the guitar and a part of the table top and extending from the lower left to right of top center and to above center on the right edge, is not sufficiently assertive to prevent the subsidiary units from escaping from the containment it provides. Obviously, the close affinity in pattern does not allow them to be affected or imposed upon by any confining action the triangular plane might exercise.

might say that the composition opens up and out on all four sides in the sense that at none of its borders is it enclosed, the relationships prevailing throughout the picture area among the colors, tones, etc., are such that an ebb and flow in definiteness of shape, tone and clarity of color leads the eye centripetally from all four borders to the center region, which is thus by them enframed and brought to focus. This, in principle, is the case also of portraits, or, for that matter, any type of subject, whenever the background and other secondary elements are subservient to the compositionally focalized unit and lead our eyes to converge, to gravitate towards rather than diverge from the center area.

Needless to say, as far as unity and variety are concerned, the open-ended statement, in the light of the points made in the above text, tends towards a negative, and the contained composition a positive, nature. Of itself, however, containment does not stand for organic unity of what is contained. It may help towards it, as the fisherman's net, when drawn out of the water, contains its haul and makes its contents be that fisherman's particular catch. Yet, its makeup may well include an old rag, some seaweed, a crab or two and an old shoe—nothing but a heap of disparate items—as a helter-skelter agglomeration of odds and ends of color shapes assembled on a canvas and contained by a superficially effective enframing arrangement of some sort that blocks all paths of escape constitutes that particular color hodge-podge, but also fails to bring about any structurally, *i.e.*, organically, unified entity.

III. UNITY AND VARIETY IN A WORK OF ART

To draw together and develop in more detail than we hitherto have done the principles discussed above, we shall now concentrate on one painting, Cézanne's "Man and Skull" (Fold-out Plate 67), with particular attention to determining the significance of the relationship between unity and variety to the meanings of the space-and-volume composition of the picture. What we shall be doing with this Cézanne, what we do when we study paintings in general from the standpoint of unity and variety, is what we did in

our previous essay* with the human race and pictured trees. We found that the categories humankind and pictured tree are that by virtue of essential characteristics their respective constituents have in common—*e.g.*, physical and/or psychological attributes, a special kind of identifiable conformation—and that, because of this commonality, this recurrence, this unity, we are able to recognize, identify, comprehend what we encounter. Within these categories, each of the constituents was also seen to have its own individual meaning by what occurs in it that occurs nowhere else: one member of humankind has blue eyes, another brown; one pictured tree is a Renoir-pictured tree, another a Corot, or one is a pictured tree in which the linear element is stressed, while another is a pictured tree in which the emphasis is on the volumes. So, too, within the category of Cézannesque patches of color (*i.e.*, color patches that exhibit such qualities as a particular sort of solidity, of positiveness, of vigor, of definiteness of shape, etc.) in “Man and Skull,” each color patch has characteristics that belong to it alone. One participates in the making of a unit that says elbow, another in a unit that says skull or volume or flat area. And, on account of this individuality, this diversity among the constituents of a category, is it possible for us to be interested and for our attention to be held, for only as we perceive the new, the not-elsewhere-known, are we able to learn and to grow.

Let us now investigate “Man and Skull” from the point of view of the unity of its varied constituent masses. Our eye lands on a given element—say, the shoulder of the man. This unit is, as we have intimated, part of a category made up of a number of units—the skull, the hand on the knee, the head, the corner of the table and so forth—because there is repeated in them a set of Cézannesque qualities by which they acquire the identity of Cézanne-units-in-this-picture. Each conveys, achieves essentially the same basic thing—a kind of positive, forceful, punctuating beat, a weight, a solidity, an austerity, a restraint. It does not, however, do so

* Spring, 1976, issue of the JOURNAL, pp. 12–32.

without variation. In one it is blue that comes to the fore, in another it is ivory. In one "shoulderness," in another "table-ness." One is spherical, another flat. One is rectilinear and another curved. That is to say, each unit achieves essentially the same thing, but it gets there differently. Likewise might we go from home to our place of work every day. But on one day we go through the park and enjoy the silhouetted trees against the clear sky. On another we break the trip by stopping to buy some hot chestnuts. And on still another we drive a friend into town with us. Each time we reach our destination, but differently. We play, as it were, variations on our theme of going from our home to our place of work, and, needless to say, our trips are, as a result, not monotonous.

What, then, is Cézanne's theme in "Man and Skull"? Many people would readily reply that it is "a young man in philosophical meditation as he looks at a skull." That, however, is not the picture's theme, not the idea according to which and for the sake of which Cézanne selected, used and organized his material. Rather, that was his *subject*. To say "young man in meditation as he looks at a skull" a black-and-white photograph would do. Besides, we find a similar episode depicted—a young man meditating as he looks at a skull—in a watercolor by Delacroix (Plate 44) which, with its theme built around an emphatic, upright, centered grouping, is not at all similar to the Cézanne in terms of picture theme. Renoir's "At the Café" (Plate 38), too, shows a figure leaning with elbow on a table and meditating; but the theme here is of a fluid arabesque of warmly-sensuous color volumes of tender solidity that gracefully link up with each other. The theme in "Man and Skull" involves a forcefully dynamic staccato of positive, rugged, weighty blocks of structural color decisively and rigidly set in shallow, three-dimensional space and organized compactly on a geometric or architectural type of framework.

In "Man and Skull," with all the essentials that recur and make for a oneness of the composite character identifiable by the set of recurring Cézannesque characteristics qualifying the use of the plastic means, we find a varied, though orderly, organization. But it is not precisely the sort of order or

organization that we find in nature. Order or organization no doubt exists in nature, but, as we noted earlier, we feel, suspect rather than perceive or understand, its existence because the order and the variety are not of our making: nature outside of or apart from us does not speak our language. Whenever and wherever we observe order, it is a man-made order, *i.e.*, an order that the manner in which we perceive imposes on outside circumstances and objects. And establishing a significant order—significant, that is, to man—organizing nature from man's point of interest, is a great part of the artist's motivation and a great part of art's function. In other words, the artist necessarily seeks to recreate or remold nature nearer to the human heart's desire in terms of an order, or unified variety, accessible to the human mind and emotions.

Artist or not, however, we constantly do, we must do, just that. We must and do select and organize what nature offers according to our human interest and possibilities so as to understand. In perception we always select from the endless outside stimuli and organize our selections according to our interest, background, feelings and capabilities.* In terms of physical activity, too, we impose order on the world. Even in the simple act of picking flowers, we gather those we want and leave out those that do not answer to the effect we wish to produce. The landscape architect does a comparable thing on a larger scale, as does the architect proper with regard to the rough materials of wood, stone, metal, etc., that he assembles in a specific manner and as does the city planner with regard to the components he works with. Likewise do we impose order when we plan and plant a garden, choose our garments, arrange our hairdo, shape out the course of our work for the day. A cook, for instance, selects and organizes her raw material. That is, she establishes specific relationships among the meat, the vegetables, the spices, the water, the heat, the time according to the purpose she wants to achieve—the stew identity that makes culinary sense and can satisfy our need. Like the cook, the scientist,

* For an analysis of the process of perception, see the Spring, 1970, issue of the JOURNAL, pp. 6–17.

exactly as the rest of us can but do, utilizes what nature offers but not in the way it is offered. His interests lead him to impose a particular order by isolating one molecule from another, combining one chemical with another and so on.

In short, and to repeat, any order, culinary or other, that makes sense to us is always of man's making. And any order or unity that makes aesthetic sense is of the artist's making. This means that a peach or a girl is not "beautiful" until we see it or her as such—not, as a student of ours once remarked during a discussion of an unusually luscious rendering of fruit by Cézanne, that a peach is beautiful* *per se*, so that all Cézanne had to do was to record what his eye registered. The fallacy of his statement lies, of course, in the erroneous assumption, so often encountered, that an artist's primary accomplishment is technical virtuosity: nature offers all that is necessary, and the painter's intellect, imagination and emotions need play no part in his endeavor. Along the same line of thought was the comment of another of our students in a letter written from Aix-en-Provence, the

* "Beauty," the characteristic of being beautiful, is a term commonly and mistakenly used as a synonym for "aesthetic." In point of fact, when we say of a thing or situation that it is "beautiful," we mean that it excites in us a keen sensuous pleasure or exalts our mind or spirit. The term "aesthetic," in opposition to this, comprises those characteristics of a thing or situation which render it capable of such excitation or exaltation. In other words, while the word "aesthetic" bears reference only to qualities, properties, of the objective world, "beauty" is a qualification we bestow on what pleases us sensuously and psychologically. And, since each individual differs in his sensuous, intellectual and spiritual responses, what is beautiful differs for each person. Its aesthetic identity, however, remains constant.

Beauty, then, is not a quality inherent in a thing or situation, but is self-reflexive. It is a term we use to indicate that we have responded to something in a certain way. Accordingly, it is possible to acknowledge the aesthetic merit of, for example, a given painting—*i.e.*, to comprehend that it expresses significant broad human values in terms of the artist's medium and so forth—and yet not, because of one's particular psychological makeup, like it, not find it beautiful. By the same token, it is also possible to find beauty in what is not aesthetic *per se*. Such is the case, for instance, with someone who goes simply gaga over the color blue, who will like, think beautiful, a mediocre painting or a nondescript dress merely because it is predominantly of *that* color.

To describe a thing or situation as being beautiful is, therefore, to make a subjective, not an objective, observation. It does indicate that the one who uses the adjective likes, enjoys, the thing he calls "beautiful"—and he has the right to state his personal feelings—but does not make the thing thus described necessarily beautiful to, *i.e.*, to the liking of, other observers.

town in southern France where Cézanne lived and painted, that "Cézanne is all around here—the Cézanne green, the Cézanne terra cotta. All he had to do was to look at the landscape and paint it as he saw it." And another student travelling in Venice was struck, he told us, with the fact that everything reflected what we call in our study of Venetian painting the "Venetian glow."*

On the face of it, the students who find the scenes to correspond with paintings may seem to us to be correct in their observations. Upon reflection, we realize that what has, in fact, happened is that their eyes and minds had been opened by Cézanne and the Venetian artists and that, as they looked at Aix and Venice, they selected and organized what was there in terms of what they already knew. Marsden Hartley, we may note in this respect, did not, in his version of the mountain Ste-Victoire, select the green and terra cotta color scheme, but used various hues of purple; nor did Giotto, who painted in Padua, a suburb of Venice, choose to include in his work any "Venetian glow." Obviously, the "glow" did not elect for whom to glow and not to glow; it was the individual who made up his own mind whether to see the glow or not or to use it or not.

One of our students, who had perhaps better understood the point, expressed his disappointment in the fact that other people he was travelling with in France had not had their eyes opened to certain effects of the landscape and were, as a result, missing much of what there was to see. The import of his observation can be illustrated by comparing Cézanne's "Valley of the Arc (Mont Ste-Victoire Seen from Bellevue)" (Plate 7) with a photograph of the site (Plate 8). Cézanne's painting is clearly not a record of what was there. It shows an arrangement of the elements of the scene from the point of view of the artist's interest, while the photograph, save for the angling of the camera and the circumscribing effect of its lens, indicates no such selective emphasis

* "Venetian glow" refers to the sense of internal, structural illumination, usually golden in effect, that pervades most Venetian canvasses. It is associated with the technique of underpainting and multilayered glazing that characterizes the Venetian tradition.

or specific organization. The Cézanne, accordingly, has a greater sense of actuality—an actuality of a human sort—because it is the result of a human being's organization and order that came about from his experience and his expression of that experience and because nature has no human significance until it has been experienced by human beings. (As John Dewey points out, experience and meaning are synonymous.) That, again, explains why any attempt to copy nature is not only presumptuous but meaningless and why purposive departure from what nature offers is so important in human expression and communication, whether of a general or of an aesthetic sort.

Cézanne, then, in "Man and Skull" started from the subject facts, as any one can but do, whether they were present or not while he painted. He selected from those facts, changed them, emphasized some, insisted less upon others, so that we have a kind of sequence of units that carry through in a certain way.

To the essentials of color, solidity, etc., shared by the components of the picture which, as we already noted, contribute to its unity must be added the position or location each unit assumes *vis-à-vis* the location of the other units and their distribution over the entire canvas—each one, that is, sharing with all others and repeating with variations their respective kind of compositional participation. If, for instance, with all other characteristics in common the volumes were huddled together in one corner of the painting, leaving the remaining area arid and inactive, compositional unity might not prevail.

In addition, how these units in "Man and Skull" recur in reference to each other is as important for the total effect of the canvas as what they are. As for the "what," they are solid, distinct, positive and three-dimensional. In regard to the "how," they punctuate the space and portion it off into well-marked intervals which clearly define the location of each volume in reference to the adjacent ones. Further, several of the units recur in pairs—wall and drapery, head and hand, elbow and books, skull and books, right side of table and man's torso, chair back and back of man, hand and lap, man's thigh and chair seat, floor and drapery—with a

closeness that stresses both their character as units and the rapid tom-tom beat in their relationships in space.

Also serving as an organizational element that links the varied units is a series of skewers—directional lines—running, for example, vertically from the chair leg farthest back in space through the left boundary of the man's arm, up along the drapery's edge at the right and from the left leg of the chair through the knuckles of the hand on the lap and the man's body and head, up to the top of the painting. Other similar alignments establish important connective threads. For example, the left edge of the front leg of the table lines up with that of the paper (distorted in its position for the purpose) and book above it and takes our eye up to the top of the double fold of drapery at the upper edge of the canvas. Variants on the skewer are created by the similarity and parallelism of the elbow on the table and the piece of drapery leaning on the floor and of the right edge of the table top and the line, perhaps of a pocket, left of the man's armpit. A counter-slanting skewer helps to connect through space the elbow of the man's stretched arm, his chest, the drapery beyond the wrist of the folded arm and a color-and tone emphasis on the wall towards the upper left.

We might pause to ask whether this color-and-tone emphasis could have been an accident. Surely, it has no representational or illustrative significance. In fact, it could well have happened accidentally, *i.e.*, it might not have been planned or foreseen consciously. That it was allowed to stay, however, indicates that Cézanne chose to accept it as part of his plan. And to take proper advantage of accidental occurrences or obstacles can be as intelligent and creative as to conceive the effects and make them occur. Similarly about the skewers we might question whether Cézanne saw them and was aware of what they accomplished. The answer is that, if he did not see them, he certainly felt their need and their rightness for the kind of geometrical, architectural character he sought and achieved.

In "Man and Skull," and in Cézanne's work in general, the skewers function as more than a pattern of directions, for their unifying action and the directness they impart to the picture's framework acquire a specific significance from

the nature of what they take the eye from and what they take the eye to—just as the various routes we might take to get to work are still routes from our house to our place of work and have a particular significance because of that. Correspondingly, in this Cézanne we are led from one positive thing to another, which fact lends a forcefulness and power to the skewers that as mere indicators of direction they would not have. This may be clearly seen by comparing the skewers in “Man and Skull” with those in Picasso’s “Card Player” (Plate 36), in the latter of which they connect not positive volumes but color shapes and remain only part of a pattern.*

In terms of their quality as volumes, the units of the wall and at the left under the table in the Cézanne are less positive and powerful than are the other components in the picture. Do they, because of this variety in degree of power and positiveness, break the unity of the painting as a whole? That is, do they lack sufficient essentials in common with the other units to belong with them to the total statement? The answer is no. For, just as we temper the directness and continuity of our trip from home to work by chatting with a friend or munching chestnuts yet not fail to get to our destination and to get there on time, so in the Cézanne there is room and reason for variety within the overall objectives.

* The use of skewers may at times be such that, however much the linear connection they establish be required, the linking is over-emphatic and obscures the equally needed definition of identity and of relative placement in space in the units involved. A case in point is illustrated in Seurat’s “The Models” (Plate 9), in which the rigid continuity of the oblique skewer threading the two legs of the figure seated at the right—obviously to build up the pyramidal structure of figure, hat and hassocks—performs at the expense of the equally needed differentiation in space and identity. In Titian’s “Pastoral” (Plate 10), the skewer uniting the legs of the seated nude and appearing to be continued by the closely parallel direction of the flute is open to the same hyper-criticism as that made about the one in the Seurat, although there is on the whole less ambiguity as to what is what and where each unit is. A similar ambiguity of space relationships created by injudicious reliance on the compositional potentialities of skewers is to be noted in Tintoretto’s “A Venetian Senator” (Plate 37), specifically in the skewer-joining of the background wall left of middle with the fur band down the man’s right shoulder. Almost a duplicate of this skewer’s “defect of quality” occurs in another portrait by Tintoretto, “A Venetian Procurator,” illustrated in the Autumn, 1973, issue of the JOURNAL on Plate 15.

Here, in the areas noted, the diminished positiveness and power provide a sense of relief from tension. And, despite a lessening of their distinctness in space and their sense of weight, the units of wall and under the table possess enough of these attributes to make for a basic consistency, an underlying continuity or unity. This we may say on the basis of the general principle that consistency is not just a matter of existing together, but of existing together for the sake of a single, overall aim, to which the elements contribute and of which they partake—in the case of this Cézanne, a dynamic, architectural monumentality and drama.

Elsewhere in "Man and Skull," instead of pulling his punches, Cézanne stresses effects which in the subject as such need not have either been stressed or existed as subject facts. For example, he emphasizes part of the drapery over the skull so that it comes forward, enframes the skull and works "hatlike," as it were, with it, allowing the two units to function together as a counterweight to the man's shoulder and the top of the chair at the right. The entire drapery, as a matter of fact, is itself expressed metaphorically rather than literally. Indeed, by his departure from the subject facts, Cézanne, in effect, "murders" the drapery, but, again, for the sake of a new order and meaning, the order and meaning of this painting. To wit, he detaches the decorative pattern of the drapery from the ground it belongs to—much in the manner of and for a similar basic purpose to that of Tintoretto in such works as "A Venetian Senator" (Plate 37)—in order to make these subsidiary units share the duties of the main ones, carry on the idea of the theme and help to unify it on the basis of what is essential to the main argument of in-and-out activity of compact and distinct color-structured volumes in shallow, three-dimensional space. The pattern, in fact, suggests a forest of branches and leaves in space, the patterning shapes assuming a sense of volume and the ground of the drapery functioning not unlike the wall setting in Cézanne's "Potted Plants" (Plate 65). At the same time, however, the drapery retains its character as a plane and as a shape to set off the forward-projecting figure and table and to play its part in the geometrical framework. A parallel to this in terms of our analogy of our journey from

home to our place of work occurs when, in addition to munching chestnuts or diverting ourselves in some other way, we review the day's business as we travel.

At this point, we might comment that there is a somewhat too great insistence on the detachment of the curving "branch" that seems to emerge, or even to grow, from the man's head, just above his hand—as if on our trip to our office we become so intent on reviewing the day's work that we bump our nose on a lamp post and arrive late or at least a little worse for wear. Here, likewise, Cézanne delays the achievement of his purpose by directing our eye in a conflicting direction: are we to follow the slant of the man's shoulder, neck and head to the hairline at the temple and on to the slant line between the "branch" and the overlapping piece of drapery to reach the peak of the composite figure-table pyramidal formation, or should our eye be guided by the skewer that runs from the shoulder, along the eyebrow and on to the "branch"? The fact that a somewhat similar ambiguity exists about the precise location of the lower angle of the compositional cube formation (Is it at the table corner, and does the lower right side of the cube then follow along the right side of the table to the man's shoulder, or are we to see the lower tip of the cube where the hand rests on the lap and then move on up that arm to the cube's angle at the right, the man's shoulder?) does not, of course, diminish or redeem the disturbance caused by either one of the indecisive statements.

A hypercriticism may also be applied to the outline of the neck and head and to their relationship to the adjacent drapery, where, for the good of the picture cause, the theme, Cézanne did pull his punch a bit too much. In attempting to differentiate the various units from each other, he fumbled, tried again and finally failed to identify them adequately in terms of volumes and intervals of the sort that the rest of the picture calls for—as we might mistakenly board a trolley that will take us into the country rather than to the office or decide to walk the entire ten miles between home and work, a splendid undertaking for the health but not the most efficient means for getting where we intend to go. That is to say, neither did Cézanne at the

neck-head-drapery line, nor did we when we chose to board the trolley or walk to work, use the most appropriate means for achieving his, our, goal; nor did he, did we, use the means in a way that would lead to his, to our, reaching it. For his statement to be entirely convincing, Cézanne cannot afford confusion in space, and the kind of space he produced at this area does not work for, but against, the order of the theme. Throughout the rest of the picture, in the rise and fall of the various emphases played on the space distinction of the volumes, each unit leads us to expect sufficient of this essential characteristic to recur, albeit with the occurrence of some novelty. But at the neck-head-drapery area not enough of the expected essential space distinction recurs, and the difference in the space here from that in the rest of the picture is greater than its similarity, hence constitutes a break from the point of view of the theme: not being sufficiently clear, the space creates confusion as to just where the neck and head stand with reference to the adjoining drapery, and there is, accordingly, a hole in the picture fabric. It is, in short, the Japanese lantern or the red balloon instead of the sun.*

We should observe, in this context, that our criticism does not apply to the "holes" Cézanne created in the drapery, for in these we find a basic consistency with the function of other units. Not only do they work with the ins and outs of the eye sockets, the nose, etc., of the skull, but also, as already remarked, carry on one of the primary characteristic activities of the determining theme.

On the whole, the idea of unity or order in a painting is not unlike that in the presentation of a thesis. There needs to be a selection, a marshalling of such arguments in such a sequence as to make the point of the entity clear and convincing. And Cézanne, in "Man and Skull," for his architectural presentation of powerful thrusts and counterthrusts in compact, three-dimensional space dynamically articulated, likewise marshalled his arguments and went about making color solid, structurally deep, forceful; he created a strong drama of light and dark, even accenting the con-

* See above, pages 6-7.

trasts with a cutting of light into dark at the collar and in the front of the coat; he made his shapes, even when they curve, rigid, the modeling angularly faceted and the linear directions, the volumes and intervals positive, the brush work deliberate and the pigment rugged. Collectively, the units and the way in which they are rendered contribute to the geometry of the framework—a cube on one of its angles held in equilibrium within and by the four wedges at the corners (see Plate 66).

But, again, the soft, ambiguous curves and illy-defined space relationships at the neck, head and drapery fail to support adequately or to carry out the picture idea. The effect at this juncture is of a malapropism or a *non sequitur*, as if we were listening to or reading something and were suddenly presented with a statement that caused us to ask, What has that got to do with it? We still get the point of the whole picture, the whole argument, but a detail pulls us momentarily in another direction of thought. The same phenomenon can be observed in paintings by artists other than Cézanne, such as “Figures at the Beach” (Plate 11) by Maurice Prendergast, where the white of the sail at the upper right corner and the purple of the parasol at the upper center are not anticipated by the picture context in terms of the color intensity in the case of the sail and its dullness in the parasol. In Glackens’ “The Raft” (Plate 33), the highlighted area on the slide is overstated as such; it is too obvious with reference to the rest of the canvas. In van Gogh’s “Thatches in the Sunshine (Reminiscence of the North)” (Plate 59), the unpatterned area of the red roof on the foreground cottage constitutes another such unintegrated, unexpected unit, as, in his “Smoker” (Plate 61), do the line separating the coat’s lapel at the right from the man’s shirt and the triangular shape of the lower part of the body, which repeats the shape of the hat but not what is essential about it, not the solidity, however slight, that would establish organic unity. The adjective, that is to say, is repeated, but not the noun.

In each of the cases cited—the Cézanne, the Prendergast, the Glackens, the van Goghs—it is a situation of matter out of place—*i.e.*, matter not “wrong” in itself, but unsuited

to the purpose or context. If one of us were to break into a rendition of "Ave Maria" at a board meeting or while shopping at a grocery store, however well we might sing it, that, too, would be matter out of place. Or, if we were to give a talk against cigarette smoking and specify in crescendo fashion all the harm it can do—how it stains the teeth, affects the mucous membrane of the mouth, clogs the lungs—and then were to add in the same persuasive tone of voice that smoking will help the digestion and soothe the nerves, what would we be doing? We would be opening the door with one hand and pushing it closed with the other. We would be working at cross purposes, eroding the inter-support of our various statements, doing Prendergast's white sail or van Gogh's red roof, the fifth-columnist or traitor job on our own proposition, thereby defeating ourselves. As we developed or used the argument, our comment on the effect on the nerves and the digestion becomes matter out of place, and the unity of the whole is naturally impaired, broken. What we were striving for, aiming at and said before this comment does not lead to where we go. Our follow-up is unexpected and is, therefore, a bump, a jolt, as are also "non-conforming" the units in the paintings above cited and as is also, for another example, the quiver of arrows in Cranach the Elder's "The Nymph of the Spring" (Plate 32), which abruptly penetrates the picture at the right edge and, except for its counterbalancing the slant of the figure's bent arm at the left, is more of an interloper than a supportive member of the cast.

It should be emphasized that, in our talk against smoking, it is because of the *manner* in which we used the last argument that that argument is matter out of place, for we can well use the contradictory material as a reinforcement rather than a deterrent to the main theme. We may, for instance, say that, even though and precisely because smoking may help the digestion and may soothe the nerves, the smoker is likely to indulge the more and forget the possible harm. Indeed, by using the material in this way, we actually emphasize our point. In "Man and Skull" Cézanne does exactly that with his treatment of the units of the walls: he strengthens his main point by making them flat and

saying, in effect, that, even though flat, they are solid, and, precisely because they are flat, they stress the three-dimensionality of the volumes by contrast. In like fashion, under the table on the left he says that, even though the fold of drapery is less weighty than is the drapery elsewhere, it leans on the floor as convincingly as does the man's arm on the table and, by so doing and echoing the curve of the leaning arm, brings to the fore the positiveness of the latter. As for the neck, head and drapery junction, on the other hand, the similarity in color, tone and linear direction to other components is not enough to integrate it with the rest, and it remains inconclusive.

However, even in the original version of our speech against smoking, we were, on the whole, persuasive; and that is the case also of Cézanne in "Man and Skull": he is, on the whole, convincing, even though at the neck, head and drapery his uncertainty does not support his cause—as if he were saying, "I mean this; no, I mean that." In fact, the "regrets," the *pentimenti*, or repaintings, show that he was conscious of the problem and that he repeatedly attempted to solve it.* He did not succeed in doing so and finally failed to make clear just what he wanted to say at that point in reference to space definition everywhere else that comes across so unambiguously and positively. This was, in truth, a more or less constant difficulty for Cézanne—the difficulty of getting directly just the color, just the tone needed. The "regrets" are witness to it, as stuttering or fumbling with words is to the difficulty a person has in expressing himself in speech. And, just as the halting character of his perception and execution was a feature of Cézanne's personality, so is it a characteristic of and revealed by his painting. The slow, arduous manner of doing is part of what the work expresses; it functions in the emotional tension, the power, the restraint embodied in the canvasses. Nonetheless, it is no longer an asset when, as in "Man and Skull" at the neck-head-drapery area, the labor is felt as such and is not justified by the result.

* At one time, the "regrets" reveal, the outline of the head fell short of the drapery.

For all of Cézanne's lapses at the neck-head-drapery relationship and at the "branch" above the head, "Man and Skull" remains, as we have said, convincing. There is sufficient teamwork between the components to establish a specific order of monumental, architectonic actuality to which the geometry of the architectural, constructive members—the columns (body, table leg, skull and its pedestal of books and drapery), the platforms (lap, books and table top), the girders and buttresses (skewers, chair back, table leg and sides), the blocks, the angles—contribute. With the exception noted, each of the solid volumes is set in a distinct volume of space, an architectural space, and they hold each other up in the picture's internal structure: thrust is met by counterthrust; push pushes against push; planes jut in and out and intersect, as do risers and treads, in two large, contrasting, diagonal steps, with their dynamic activity recurring in the lateral deployment of a "semi-folded-screen" or "accordion-pleat" formation involving the sides of the table and the man's torso—a formation not infrequently found in Cézanne, as, for example, in "Men Bathing" (Plate 23)—that is in keeping with the ins and outs of the pattern of the drapery and of the eye sockets of the skull. These are all variations on the pervasive, and therefore unifying, in-and-out motif of positive volumes that characterizes this painting.

Also of importance as a unifying theme is the ordering into a single element of the two main upright units—the one made by the man's torso and head and the one made by the skull with its drapery—"hat" on its top and its books-and-drapery "pedestal" below—more or less parallel to and confronting each other and holding three-dimensional space between them.* The two uprights contrast with each other

* A pair of upright units similar and parallel to each other would, of themselves and in inverse ratio to the amount of variety in their respective contents, make, by the fact of their recurrence, for what we have described as an uncontained composition. They would appear to have belonged to a continuing series of such units, from which series they, the pair, have been isolated. The problem, therefore, of integrating them into an entity that avoids the monotony of their repetition happens frequently in the traditions, and its solution is diversely carried out. In Masaccio's "Adam and Eve" (Plate 39) and Renoir's

in subject facts and plastic makeup but act together compositionally as counterweights, the man's body pulling to the right and towards the top and the skull-and-pedestal unit holding our attention at the left and leading it down to the floor. In this counter-pulling tension, the two columnar sets of volumes help to balance the opposite slant of the relationship between the receding planes of the lap and table top. They also join forces with the man's left temple

"Caryatids" (Plate 40), for instance, the two units are joined largely by the fluid play of line, light and shadow that glide on, in their patterning, from one figure to the other. Van Eyck, in "Jan Arnolfini and Jeanne de Chenany, his Wife" (Plate 41), unites the two figures by involving them in the closed pattern of a pyramidal organization, the apex of which is the mirror on the wall behind them. Not unlike the figures in the van Eyck, the two main uprights in El Greco's "Annunciation" (Plate 42) are also related to each other, united, by their participation in a pyramidal framework. The side walls of the pyramid, the two figures, in the El Greco slightly curve towards each other and towards the central upper area, in conjunction with which they construct more of a gothic arch or a formation of praying hands than a rigidly rectilinear pyramid.

In Dürer's "Adam and Eve" (Plate 43), the relationship is established mainly by the bend of the figures and the gearlike action of the arms. On the other hand, the two main figures, two upright volumes, in Giorgione's "The Holy Family" (Plate 27), are interdependent units constructing together a single broad-oval mass, the upper half of which, as it relates to the rectilinear horizontal parapet, connects readily with the broad arch and horizontal sill in the background at the right. Moreover, the draperies, deployed on the ground as if they were large petals, make up, with the rocks below the arch, a star or flowerlike pattern that belongs, as a sort of base, to both of the figures and helps to tie them together. The general character of the foreground group is reiterated in the landscape behind. The oblique position of the Child functions not unlike the "hyphen"—the streamerlike extension of the headdress—in Giorgione's "Two Prophets" (Plate 48).

Tintoretto unifies the figures in his "Two Prophets" (Plate 47) by counterbalancing their respective forward sweep from the top, and in his "Christ and the Woman of Samaria" (Plate 28) by incorporating them in the all-inclusive, curved pyramid that implicates the major area of the painting. Furthermore, the tree-well unit at the center acts, as does frequently the Cross in Crucifixion scenes, as a referral for the bilateral symmetry of the side figures and thus anchors them firmly into the composition.

Again, in "Advice to a Young Artist" (Plate 50) by Daumier, we recognize the same basic problem of integrating two upright elements into the painting's total entity. It is solved here very directly by the back-and-forth activity of strongly lighted areas and deep darks that sharply move into and against each other, carrying the eye over from one figure to the other, including the papers each holds in his hands, and are echoed in the subtle pattern of light and dark in the rest of the composition. (For Daumier's integrated involvement of the two main figures in his organization of "The Miller's Daughters," we refer the reader to the Spring, 1971, issue of the JOURNAL, pp. 21-24 and

and slanting line above it—with which a relationship is established that directs our eye downward to the books—and with the vertical sequence of his left hand and the chair leg below it in constructing the four vertical “spines” of the quasi-cube formation that forms the main part of the geometric space organization of the picture (see Plate 66).

Plate 17, and, for George Washington Mark’s solution of the problem, to the Spring, 1976, issue, pp. 28–30 and Fold-out Plate 106.)

Renoir’s “Luncheon” (Plate 25) shows a compositional connection between the two uprights by way of their partnership in a play of axial planes (foreground chair, hat, table top, woman, back wall, side wall and man). In Rousseau’s “The Wedding (Past and Present)” (Plate 53), the pair of uprights, the standing figures, are integral parts of a receding series of planes and are sandwiched in, in depth, by the plane of the plant and branch which enter the picture at the right and spread over and “embroider” the front of their garments and by the counterbalancing plane immediately behind them which reaches from left to right and patterns, “embroiders,” that area of the sky with its small, decorative units of foliage. And this motif of planes-compactly-sandwiched-in-space is echoed in the heads at the upper part of the canvas, set as they are among planes of clouds both in front and behind them.

In “Mlle Lulu” (Plate 45) by Demuth, the triangular opening of the tent defines the area of action for the two figures. It holds them together within its boundaries and initiates the fanning-out of tent, heads, arms, bodies and legs that spreads downward to the bottom of the picture, where it is countered, and the figures are contained, by a bowl-shaped curve that parallels and underscores the similar shape traced by the lateral sequence of poles, footstool and legs. Picasso, on the other hand, in “Harlequins” (Plate 54) engages the two foreground figures in a back-and-forth interaction with the background—the pillar at the right, topped with flowers, counterbalancing the tall figure at the left in the large unifying V-shape or inverted pyramid that results from this relationship.

We direct the reader also to Modigliani’s “Landscape” (Plate 49) and Charles Prendergast’s “Two Nudes” (Plate 55), a gilt carved-wood piece. In the first, the pair of tall trees function together as a single repoussoir-plane which, by its positiveness and foreground location, directly affects the recession of the rest of the landscape and, by the upward push of its slant, imparts dramatic activity to the otherwise uneventful, placid presentation. In the case of the Prendergast, the two figures are self-contained by the intertwining of the arms at the center and the rhythmic balancing, the duplicating with appropriate variations, of the bodies, the legs, the feet and the raised arms and masses of hair—the combined silhouette of the figures suggesting the pattern of a Rorschach inkblot without the latter’s strict bilateral symmetry.

Akin in principle to the Masaccio and the Renoir cited at the beginning of this note is de Chirico’s “Gladiators” (Plate 51), in that the two upright figures are locked together by the interrelationships among their constituents. In the de Chirico the figures are further consolidated into a single block by the recumbent figures with which they interlock at the base. The angel in

The meaning of "Man and Skull," the architectural power of its dynamic organization, is not, of course and to reiterate this important point, due exclusively to the "how" of the compositional arrangement of volumes and intervals, but also, and equally, depends on the nature of the "what"—remember, again, the red balloon *vs.* the sun. Unity, then, is not derived solely from the treatment and organization of the volumes, the planes, the patterns, the connective links—a black-and-white photograph does not convey the monumental identity of the painting. Rather, it is primarily a function of the quality of the color, to change which would

the Masaccio, with its horizontal spread over the figures, fulfills that binding function only to some extent; and in the Renoir it is the architectural element—the slab above and below the figures and the niche in which they are set—that reinforces their containment and oneness. But for the delicacy of color, the highly articulated mass made of the two standing figures in the de Chirico rises like a veteran oak above its old gnarled roots. In these three pictures, the Masaccio, the Renoir and the de Chirico, as also in Delacroix' "Hamlet and Horatio" (Plate 44), the two figures are centered in the composition and are surrounded, enframed, by the rest of the picture area, which, therefore, further pushes or holds them together. Or, as still another illustration, take Pascin's "Venus and Cupid" (Plate 52): the two figures here owe much of their plastic integration to a network of rhythmic relationships, a mutual exchange, one might say, among the fluid colors, the warm tones, the fluttering lights, the gentle swirls, the delicate planes that make up, with varying degree of accentuation, both the setting and the figures.

And Mondrian in "Trafalgar Square" (Plate 58), to enlist an example from among more modern works, solved a not dissimilar general problem of unification by effecting a balance of equivalents between the relatively large color shapes that draw the eye to the column at the left and the compensating small, eye-focalizing units in the narrower column at the right. Both upright border-bands are joined at their base by the horizontal border of color patches and with it make up an angular U-shaped container for the central black-and-white portion of the painting.

Of capital importance is that it be clearly understood and borne in mind that, in the examples cited here, we talk only of specific correlations and that, in all of these pictures, the varied recurrence of qualities intrinsic to the color, the light, the modeling, the linear drawing, the technique and the space contributes as much to the organic oneness of, and the variety within, the vertical parallel units as do the interrelationships we chose to single out. The fact, that is, cannot be made too emphatic that the adjustment of volume to volume, with regard to location and spacing, which helps towards their unified integration both between themselves and with the context, would not, could not achieve this unification were it not for similarly adjusted characteristics imparted to their color, their illumination, their shape, their texture, etc.—all congenial partners pooling their efforts in the carrying out of a joint enterprise or project, the overall theme and identity of the picture.

change the expressive significance of the work as a whole. Replace, for example, the blue area between the table and the man's lap with a yellow, a red or even a blue other than Cézanne's, and everything falls apart.

From what we have seen thus far about unity and variety, we may say that, even though unity is conducive to the coherence of a work of art, in itself it offers no guarantee of aesthetic merit,* and that, in order for unity to be significant, it need be adequately varied, and it also need be organic in the sense that it be not superimposed by the mechanistic application of an arbitrary rule or "system," but that it take its cue from, as it is also one of the means of carrying out, the general purpose, the picture idea, theme or design. It must, that is, always refer to a particular point of view or interest and emerge from inside the intent. We may also conclude that unity is the quality that results when the simultaneous actions or activities of all the varied constituents work towards the achievement of the same overall purpose. An elementary illustration of this is a baseball game, in which each player fulfills a different rôle, yet all members of a team pull towards, act for the purpose of, winning the game. Such related activities correspond to what in biology we refer to as synergy ("syn" meaning "with," "ergon" meaning "work") or synergistic action—coordinative action of discrete agencies as, for example, when we turn our eye to one side, the simultaneous contraction and expansion of opposing muscles are such that the total effect is greater than the sum of the effects taken independently. In essence, this may simply be described as cooperative activity or teamwork making for unity. And it is only on that understanding of organic, structural unity that we have the right to find fault, as we did earlier in this essay, with the white sail in Prendergast's "Figures at the Beach" (Plate 11): it, the painting, is a team of "horses"

* With some of the most mediocre of paintings there is absolutely no fault to find with either the unity or the variety of their components. They may say their say with an impeccable varied unity of a sort and still say nothing that amounts to anything from the standpoint of art.

or "muscles" or color units of which one horse, one muscle, one color unit, unmindful of the aim of the others, pulls along its own selfish way. In the case of Cézanne's "Man and Skull" at the area of the neck-head-drapery, it is one horse that lags behind, puffs and pants as he goes trampling over and over the same ground and there bogs down.

It would be a mistake to limit the illustration of the unity and variety of a picture's mass composition to the type of intersupport that exists in an architectonic construction such as Cézanne's "Man and Skull." Indeed, appropriately adjusted means will hold up physically or aesthetically in a non-architectural thing—a flower, for instance—as successfully as buttresses appropriately adjusted will help to hold up a cathedral. There would be equilibrium and unity in each instance, although each would have a different identity because of the differences in what is used, how adjusted and what for. As an example of a non-architectural painting, there is Renoir's "Noirmoutier" (Plate 26), in which the small, gently fluid tree at the right supports the large tree rising at the left and spreading its canopy of foliage across the upper area of the landscape by unifying with it in its graceful enframing action, in its flow of color chords and in its sinuous pattern. Without the small tree, a link in the otherwise unified picture situation would be missing, and its unity compromised. Thus, the small tree successfully makes the team, but the teamwork here is based on essentials other than those in the Cézanne.*

With "Man and Skull" we examined the occurrence of unity and variety principally with regard to the compositional distribution or arrangement of the main constituent

* It might, perhaps, help to clarify this point further if we were to examine in some detail another painting—Corot's "Italian Landscape" (Plate 21)—in which the unity does not depend on an architectural type of composition. Here, we shall note a unit at the upper center of the canvas that says "cloud" from the point of view of subject and also says "sheep" and "rock" from the point of view of picture unit, with, however, no loss in identity as a cloud, but rather, with its identity made specific. (Because the silver-cream of the cloud and the silver-blue of the sky are close to each other in value, the main cloud and smaller ones are, regrettably, hardly discernible in the black-and-white reproduction as the distinct though delicate volumes in space that, in the

units. We only touched upon the aspect of unity and variety that involves the selection, use and organization of the plastic means, and we did not concern ourselves at all with the concepts of unity and variety as they apply to the relationships established by the artist in his work among the expressive, the decorative and the illustrative, among the elements borrowed from the traditions, among the plastic means employed and between the “container,” the picture’s format, and the contents.

Before exploring these additional facets of unity and variety, however, we plan to continue, in the next issue of the

painting, they so clearly are.) This unit belongs to the sky, and it also belongs to the area comprising the sheep in the center foreground because there recurs in the cloud essentials that make up the sheep—its silver-cream color of a quasi-muted tone, its comparatively small size and generally curving shape, its subtly graded modeling, its being light in weight as a volume, its relative location (*i.e.*, its being where it is in reference to its context and to the cloud above and, like the cloud, functioning as a gentle, yet positive, landmark which, together with the cluster of delicate trees on each side, helps to contain and channel the intervening space back through the center of the painting). Further, the cloud enters with its own “flock” of clouds and with them echoes in the sky the slow, delicate right-to-left and left-to-right promenading started in the foreground by the dovetailing shaded and lighted bands, the rocks, the sheep and so on, which detain the eye as it is entertained on its slow progress to the far distance. Incidentally, this is one of the ways by which Corot engrafts the intimacy, the nearby character, of the Dutch upon the vastness and epic grandeur of Claude. (For comparative illustrations of this point, we refer the reader to the Spring, 1976, issue of the JOURNAL, Plates 107, 108 and Fold-out Plate 109.)

“Couldn’t that cloud,” one may ask, “have been an accident?” in the sense that there happened to be a cloud in the sky when Corot painted his picture. The answer is, possibly, but the fact remains that the artist selected to include it and selected the color, tone, lightness of weight, etc., that characterize it as the unit it is in this painting. If we remove the cloud—which we can do imaginatively or by squinting at the canvas or by photographic technique (Plate 22)—we have a painting that falls into two separate parts, upper and lower, and we lose more than the fact of cloud because we lose what *this* sky is, with *this* cloud, thus, there, and what it does to and with the sheep and the rest of the landscape and what is done unto the sky and cloud by the sheep and the rest. We lose, that is, the all-important effects of specific relationships of specific factors, every one of which was specifically selected, used and organized, put to work in the team, by Corot in order to establish a coherent, convincing presentation or expression of his picture idea—this gently active, lyrical spatial tempo. (As an aside and of some possible interest is the fact that a natural affinity seems to exist between the visual aspect of sheep and that of certain clouds, as evidenced by the French expression, “*Un ciel moutonné*”—a “sheep sky,” a sky of fleecy clouds—and, amusingly, by the Charles Addams cartoon shown on Plate 64.)

JOURNAL, our study of the general topic of unity as a function of the picture design, this time considering the special problem of the unification of background and foreground and the significance of that to the identity of the entire painting. We shall also deal with such aspects of the general question as unity serving as a means *vs.* unity resorted to as an end, the psychological effect of repetition, and unity and variety of personality as they are revealed in an individual's achievements or expressions.

Art in Science, Science in Art*

by G. M. CANTOR**

*The wandering earth herself may be
Only a sudden flaming word,
In clanging space a moment heard,
Troubling the endless reverie.*

—Yeats

At a recent meeting of Philadelphia's Board of Education, several parents of black public school pupils urged the Board not to waste their children's time in art and music classes. They asked that their children be taught "the basics," that they be given a "real education."

Nearby, in white suburbia, the first courses to be cut by school boards faced with rising costs and public tax resistance are the music and art courses. These are labeled "frills" and become expendable.

Such attitudes are not confined to the unsophisticated. In *Technological Man*, Professor Victor C. Ferkiss pronounces that ". . . art at present provides pure sensual pleasure, entertainment, therapy and other valuable things, but it no longer serves, as it has in other civilizations, as a means for orientation or for integrating oneself with the social and physical environment."† Again, and more bluntly: "Science and technology define reality, art does not."‡

Nearly universal is this denigration of art, especially in contrast with attitudes toward science. It was not always so. The great figures of times past were men of the arts—Dante, Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Beethoven. Foreshadowed by da Vinci, who was one of the early scientist-artists, perhaps

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† *Technological Man: The Myth and the Reality*, (George Braziller, New York, 1965), p. 236.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

the transitional figure in the change-over from the age of art to the age of science was the Olympian Goethe, although he is better known for his *Werther* and *Faust* than for his accomplishments in physics, botany, osteology, mineralogy, zoology, and anatomy.

The advent of modern science—with Kepler, Galileo, Newton, and their successors—initiated a displacement of art from a position of importance to which it has never returned. Advancing by means of experiments, observation and measurement, mathematical description of processes, and the development of universal “laws,” science succeeded dramatically in making the forces of nature serve human ends by means of technology. Art could point to no comparable results. A symphony remained a symphony, a painting was just a painting. Indeed, as art increasingly reflected the influence of science and the technological revolution, works of art themselves came often to seem less comprehensible than once they had been. Art, which had helped the church, state, and individuals to apprehend the universe, to articulate relationships, and to foster certain values, was relegated to the role of creating adornments for the wealthy and entertainments for such leisure hours as the serious work of the world might allow.

The contrast between science and art came eventually to be understood in these terms:

Science apprehends nature objectively; art depicts it subjectively.

Science deals with knowledge; art is merely expressive.

The approach of the scientist is methodical, while that of the artist is imaginative.

Science is rational; art is emotional.

The works of Dewey, Barnes, and de Mazia have provided a powerful corrective to the erroneous concept of art which underlies those statements. The depiction of science, however, as embodying knowledge, rationality, and objectivity, and of the scientist as working methodically, disinterestedly, and ineluctably to bring about “progress” has received inadequate critical attention.

Despite the powerful influence of science on our lives, many who enthusiastically study the philosophy and appreci-

ation of art remain totally unaware of the philosophy and appreciation of science. The corresponding inquiries—What makes an activity ‘scientific’? When do we regard a scientific theory, idea, or investigation as successful? and so on—are moderately pursued in academe, but the quest remains obscure for most of us.

This is also true, regrettably, of our understanding of the basics of science itself. C. P. Snow has noted how few of us, though considered highly educated by traditional standards, can answer the question, What is the Second Law of Thermodynamics? or even answer the simpler question, What is meant by mass or acceleration? The former inquiry Snow regards as the scientific equivalent to, Have you read a work of Shakespeare? and the latter as the scientific equivalent of, Can you read? And so, he observes, “the great edifice of modern physics goes up, and the majority of the cleverest people in the Western world have about as much insight into it as their neolithic ancestors would have had.”*

The term “great edifice,” of course, imports into the discussion, however loosely, an esthetic judgment. The notion that the fruits and process of scientific enterprise have considerable esthetic appeal raises for us the question whether that appeal is a kind of lucky accident, a pretty but irrelevant by-product of an other-directed pragmatic endeavor, or whether the esthetic aspect is in some way intrinsic to the business of science itself. This question is a central subject of this paper.

In order properly to characterize “science,” we must first develop a conception of what precisely is the “nature” or the “reality” with which it deals. A brief examination of the history of scientific inquiry discovers that its subject has not held still. For the “nature” which the scientist has sought to know and to control has been fundamentally altered in the process.

In the beginnings of modern science, the scientist studied the natural world, the world which was apprehended by the senses in direct experience and was still perceived as the

* *Public Affairs*, (Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, 1971), p. 22.

world that God had created. The scientist soon learned, however, to separate individual natural processes from their environment, to describe them mathematically, and thus to “explain” them. At this stage, it was possible to formulate the ideal of an objective description or explanation of nature independent of God and also of man. (This is the cloak which science still appears to wear, though it long ago ceased to fit.)

As time and science marched on, the method of Newton’s mechanics was applied more and more broadly. The goal was to isolate details of nature through experiment, to describe them objectively, and to state underlying “laws” which would hold without qualification throughout the cosmos.

The resulting scientific data were applied, through technology, to transforming the world. The same effort, of course, transformed science itself by providing instruments which enabled science to probe into areas beyond the realm of ordinary sense experience. The improved telescope carried the eye to ever more remote cosmic regions. Chemistry sought to explicate processes at the atomic level. Experiments with the induction machine and the voltaic pile discovered previously unperceived electrical phenomena. In these ways, the “nature” to be investigated came to include all the areas of experience into which man could penetrate through science and technology, whether or not they were given to him “naturally” in direct experience. Yet and still, it was understood that “nature”—that is, reality without regard to man and his interference—was being described, and its laws recorded, however penetrating the inquiry, however remote or microscopic the units, and however abstract the resulting formulations.

This remaining simplicity was disturbed with the development of electrical theory, in which the “force field” had to be taken as intrinsically real. With the discovery of radioactivity, protons, neutrons, and electrons came to replace atoms as the final indivisible building blocks of matter. Finally, in the twentieth century, the “reality concept of classical atomism” collapsed. The notion of the objective reality of elementary particles gave way to much

more abstract conceptions. *Scientists discovered that they could no longer talk about the behavior of a particle apart from the process of observation, as every process of observation plays a major role in the result.*

Thus, the laws of nature which the scientists formulated mathematically would no longer deal with the elementary particles themselves, but with our knowledge of them. In the words of physicist Werner Heisenberg, whose account of the development of science we have followed in the preceding paragraphs: "The atomic physicist has had to come to terms with the fact that his science is only a link in the endless chain of discussions of man with nature, but that it cannot simply talk of 'nature' as such."*

Art, of course, had never essayed to present the "nature" it depicted apart from the human response which the work of art expressed. Science has learned that ultimately it cannot do so. Each discipline is held finally to the limit of human knowledge expressed by Immanuel Kant: "It remains completely unknown to us what objects may be by themselves and apart from the receptivity of our senses. We know nothing but our manner of perceiving them, that manner being peculiar to us, and not necessarily shared by every being, though, no doubt, by every human being."†

The scientist's "picture" of reality and the artist's are alike in that each begins with sense experience of phenomena (whether or not augmented by technology) and goes beyond that experience to depict an underlying or essential reality of the subject as experienced. Each portrays not the thing itself, but selected aspects of his knowledge of the thing portrayed.‡

* "The Representation of Nature in Contemporary Physics," *Symbolism in Religion and Literature*, Rollo May, ed., (George Braziller, New York, 1969), p. 221.

† *Critique of Pure Reason*, quoted in Will Durant, *The Story of Philosophy*, (Washington Square Press, New York, 1970), pp. 272-273.

‡ It may be argued that the Kantian barrier may be pierced by the unity of the perceived and the perceiver, a unity which resides in the energy to which both are reducible, no part of which is alien or intrinsically inaccessible to any other part; but this speculation carries us beyond the proper boundary of our present topic.

While recognizing that the nature of the response, or the character of the human involvement, of the scientist differs from that of the artist and that the difference is of tremendous importance, it should be equally clear that the traditional distinction between science as describing the objective world and art the subjective cannot be maintained.

Let us pause briefly at this point to note the distinction between "reality" as the subject of science and art (discoverable, as we have seen, not as it "is" but only as experienced) and the notion of "realism" in the *process* of scientific and artistic depiction.

Heisenberg's account of the history of physical science indicates a movement to increasingly higher levels of abstraction, not unlike the development we have seen in modern art. Thus, the transition from, say, Newton to Einstein and beyond may be roughly paralleled in painting by the transition from, say, Rembrandt to the abstract expressionists. (I am concerned here not with evaluations of this development in the case of either physics or painting, but only with the progressive departure of each from naturalism or "realism.")

An earlier development, however, one which is at the same time more important to our discussion and less obvious (indeed, more important because it is less obvious), is the departure from realism represented by both Newton and Rembrandt when contrasted with the works of their predecessors.

Aristotle had developed certain principles of mechanics relating to the kinds of motion he considered typical, principles which, within certain limits, remain "true" today. In doing so, he concentrated on the motion of bodies against appreciable resistance rather than on the question of how bodies would move if all resisting agencies were effectively removed.

Newton, following Galileo's innovation, departed from Aristotle's paradigm and substituted a new, *idealized* one, under which a single hypothesis of gravitation brought a number of previously unexplained phenomena into an intelligible pattern, permitting Newton to depict a new range of relationships and necessities as part of the order of Nature. Newton dealt with an imaginary, non-existent world, a con-

cept which is justified by the results obtained when the ideal is adjusted for actual resistances.

Newton's goal could not have been reached with Aristotle's model, although the latter had genuine merits. The point to be noted here is that the change of paradigm was an essential shift from naturalism or realism to idealism or abstraction.

In art, similarly, under prevailing cultural compulsions painting was for a time tightly lashed to literal illustrative aims. Thus, in the early Renaissance, according to Dr. Barnes, "It was necessary that church frescoes should illustrate religious motifs, that portraits should reproduce their originals, that pictures ordered by states or guilds should portray specific occurrences of interest to their purchasers."* Later, with the removal of irrelevant constraints, artists were freer to subordinate illustrative elements to plastic design. Again from Barnes: "Rembrandt's chiaroscuro is distorted light employed for two distinct and obvious purposes; first, to show an objective fact, such as the three-dimensional solidity of a head; second, as a means of giving to a particular arrangement of color and line a specific quality more moving than that yielded by ordinary illumination."†

Thus, in art as in science, figures of high attainment, with whose works we have grown comfortable through the passage of time, made major advances over their predecessors *precisely by means of purposeful distortion of, or departure from, "realism."*

This similarity of method, however, has not been accompanied by a similarity in the matter of consumer response. While modern art has had to deal from its earliest stages with the widespread but erroneous belief that its success or failure turns primarily on the extent to which it succeeds in recreating a recognizably accurate image of a particular subject, the advance of science has had no such challenge. That a gravitational theory cannot be matched to a model in the laboratory or in the woods, or even that there is no such "thing" as gravity, has caused no uproar, no concern.

* Albert C. Barnes, "The Evolution of Plastic Design," in Dewey *et al.*, *Art and Education*, (The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., 1954), p. 193.

† *Ibid.*, p. 196.

This difference in the treatment of the painter's and the scientist's pictures may rest in part on the fact that art has seemed easier of comprehension and science more difficult of comprehension than is true in either case. In the arts, by a kind of sad synecdoche, the recognition of a part—the score in music, the word in literature, the subject in painting and sculpture—has been mistaken for understanding of the whole. In science, we have preferred awe to effort and have allowed our vision of technological progress to validate, without our understanding, the underlying mystery.

In each case, we have failed to learn the language in which the practitioner (of science or art) speaks to us. There is more than a grain of truth in the saying that the world is divided into technicians who cannot tell the difference between a good poem and sentimental doggerel and 'cultured' people who know nothing about electricity except that you push a button when you want it.

The underlying reason for our readiness to concede to science the legitimacy of infinite abstraction while chiding the artist for his departure from realism is that the "medicine" of science is stronger, its metaphor vastly more powerful. The artist may transport us to

Sweet Catullus' all-but-island,
Olive-silvery Syrmio—

but the trip does not provide the pragmatic or material payoff to which we have learned to attribute the highest value. The scientist, in contrast, can enable us to be transported, physically and actually, to the solid circling moon.

The realism of science, in short, resides in its results. The rockets fly, the fever fades, the toast pops up—here is realism enough. Like the emperor's clothes, the realism of science is a tribute rather to its power and authority than to the perceptiveness of the populace.

We must recognize, of course, that while the departure of science and art from literal representation of the subject as received by the senses (with or without technological augmentation) may be a facilitating cause of certain major achievements of science and of art, it cannot be the efficient cause of those achievements. There is obviously more to

science and art than random distortion; and the “more” must in some way also be different.

Scientific achievement, of course, is commonly attributed to “the scientific method.” Science is, in this view, essentially a method, while the artist is perceived as eschewing method in favor of emotion, imagination, expression, or some such bundle amounting to “creativity.” This simplistic classification of phenomena, however, does not survive critical examination.

“The scientific method,” in its classic form, involves defining a problem that can be solved by appropriate experiment; collecting all available information that bears significantly on the problem; formulating a hypothesis, i.e., a tentative explanation or solution; and designing and carrying out an experiment in which the hypothesis will either be supported or contradicted. The experiment is critically observed, its progress accurately recorded, and conclusions are drawn from the facts produced in the experiment. The hypothesis, if validated, becomes a *theory*.

Logical. Clean. Accurate. No nonsense there! And yet the development of science has not been as simple nor its activity as automatic as “the scientific method” would suggest. *Indeed, there are crucial points at which the advances of science are either determined by esthetic considerations or achieved in precisely the same way as the achievements of the artist.*

First of all, except at the most routine level of inquiry, the formulation of the hypothesis—the development of the tentative solution to the scientific problem—does not simply “occur.” Every significant discovery involves an intuitive, imaginative, creative leap.

Bertrand Russell observed that in “the purest and driest parts of science, imagination is as necessary as in lyric poetry.”* And Planck: “The pioneer scientist must have a vivid intuitive imagination for new ideas, ideas not generated by deduction, but by *artistically* creative imagination.”†

* Quoted in Burnshaw, *The Seamless Web*, (George Braziller, New York, 1970), p. 176.

† *Ibid.*

Einstein pointed out that there is, in fact, no logical path leading to the universal laws which depict the world: "They can be reached only by intuition, and this intuition is based on an intellectual love of the objects of experience."*

Kekulé von Stradonitz, originator of the structure theory of organic chemistry, tells us that he arrived at his discovery of the benzene ring† one evening, while working on a chemistry textbook, in this manner:

. . . my spirit was with other things. I turned my chair to the fireplace and sank into a half-sleep. Again the atoms flitted before my eyes (taking the pattern of rings). Long rows, variously, more closely united; all in movement, wriggling and turning like snakes, and see, what was that? One of the snakes seized its own tail and the image whirled scornfully before my eyes. As though from a flash of lightning I awoke; this time again I occupied the rest of the night in working out the consequences of the hypothesis.‡

Such reports can be repeated endlessly. Moreover, while there are innumerable examples of intuition or flash of insight filling the interstices of the scientific method and stimulating its movement toward a meaningful result, we should recognize that the same forces and signals may even lead the scientist to pursue his quarry *in spite of* the results of relevant scientific inquiry. For example:

The incredible physical (sic) insight which had enabled (Einstein) to formulate his theories of relativity was accompanied by a self-confidence that led him on several occasions to ignore experiments which seemed to contradict his theories. Just as it was the experimental results which had finally proved false, he remained confident that the claims of the ultimate truth of quantum mechanics would ultimately be rejected. He stated his intuitive conviction aphoristically: "God does not play dice with the world."§

* *Ibid.*

† Plate 57.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

§ Jeffrey Marsh, "Images of Einstein," *Commentary*, Vol. 56, No. 6, (December, 1973), p. 68.

Preceding the creation of the hypothesis and its development into a theory, the scientific method requires the defining or formulating of a problem or question which can be experimentally resolved. Such problems, obviously, are not simply plucked at random from the wastebasket of some universal quiz program. On the contrary, a scientific group works with a set of shared assumptions called a *paradigm*. "The paradigm is the shared conceptions of what is possible, the boundaries of acceptable inquiry, the limiting cases."* Until the presence of an anomaly evokes a crisis leading to a paradigm change (or scientific revolution), the problem posed must be one that (a) emerges from the paradigm and (b) constitutes essentially a puzzle which can be assumed to have a solution. Thus, a really pressing and highly significant problem, such as the design of a lasting peace or discovery of the nature of time, may not qualify for formulation as a problem for scientific solution.

Beyond these basic criteria, however, lies human interest. The selection of the puzzle to be solved—indeed the recognition that a puzzle remains despite an apparent prior solution—turns on the scientist's *interest*, which involves the same inextricable mix of conscious and unconscious motivations as any other spur to action.

In the mix are esthetic considerations of varying import. In his study of scientific revolutions, Thomas S. Kuhn cites the late nineteenth-century crisis in physics that prepared the way for relativity theory. Leibniz and others had criticized Newton's retention of an updated version of the classical conception of absolute space. "They were very nearly, though not quite, able to show that absolute positions and absolute motions were without any functions at all in Newton's system; *and they did succeed in hinting at the considerable aesthetic appeal a fully relativistic conception of space and motion would later come to display.*"† (Emphasis mine.)

C. P. Snow has also described this sort of esthetic discontent. Scientists are suspicious, he says, and scientific history

* R. E. Ornstein, *The Psychology of Consciousness*, (The Viking Press, New York, 1972), p. 3.

† Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1970), p. 72.

validates such suspicions, when a subject is in an “ugly” state.

This phenomenon is currently exemplified by Harvard physicist Steven Weinberg, who, it is reported, is attempting to do what Einstein failed to do—to prove that all the forces of nature are one. Of the three forces long recognized by scientists—gravity, electricity, and magnetism—Maxwell in 1860 showed that the last two were parts of the same thing, electromagnetism. Then two additional forces were recognized: a “weak” force, found in some kinds of radioactivity, and a “strong” force, holding the nuclei of atoms together.

Scientists found unacceptable, however, the notion that nature required four separate and distinct forces to keep things in order. This offended their esthetic preconceptions: the wish to perceive nature as simple and symmetrical. (The unity sought by the physicist is the unity which the artist seeks also to provide. It is a unity which embraces a diversity of details or phases; “. . . it involves the coherence of the situation itself, an interpretation of it which takes account of all its relevant qualities, and brings them together in a consistent presentation.”)*

Weinberg has demonstrated that electromagnetism and the “weak” force are two aspects of the same phenomenon, thus reducing the four forces to three. Following further work, it now appears that the particles constituting the “strong” force are also part of the same force as the other two. This leaves only gravity outstanding as a separate force—a “problem” to which Weinberg is confident a solution will be found. *That this is a problem and that there is presumed to be a solution are assumptions, notions, phenomena having a purely esthetic derivation.* In Weinberg’s words: “It is, in a sense, the goal of a great many theoretical physicists to get a simpler, more elegant, more all-embracing description of nature, in which there are less [sic] arbitrary elements.”†

* Albert C. Barnes, *The Art in Painting*, (Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1937), p. 15.

† Quoted in Joel N. Shurkin, “He May Succeed Where Einstein Failed,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 13, 1975, p. 8-A.

The physicists mentioned by Weinberg are moving under an esthetic mandate, charting their course by esthetic signals, and seeking a goal that is esthetically determined. This statement is not a Freudian interpretation of their unconscious intent; it is entirely conscious and fully articulated by the physicists themselves.

Having mentioned Freud, let us pause here to note that, while our examples are taken mainly from the physical sciences, on the one hand, and the visual arts, on the other, science has other rooms in which the voices of other arts are heard. The very names of certain concepts developed by Freud—the Oedipus and Electra complexes—acknowledge their sources in classical Greek mythology. While insisting always on the scientific validity of his work, Freud nevertheless prescribed that an ideal psychoanalytic education “would include branches of knowledge which are remote from medicine and which the doctor does not come across in his practice: The history of civilization, mythology, the psychology of religion and the sciences of literature. Until he is well at home in these subjects, an analyst can make nothing of a large amount of his materials.”*

A contemporary psychoanalyst, John C. Sonne, M.D., speculates that “not until we say something metaphorical do we have a human relationship. Metaphors are the reservoir of relationships and the instruments for relating.” He states that “. . . the psychotherapist endeavors to establish a poetic and permanent organic unity with the psyche of his patient, and shares with his patient in participating in the experience of composing metaphors. ‘You’ll live in my mind forever’ is a poetic or metaphorical statement which is meaningless if taken literally, yet to live in each other’s minds is a requirement of psychic life if we are not to live alone.”†

When scientists seek to share with the world at large their highest achievements or their most profound insights, they

* Quoted in Samuel A. Guttman, “Some Aspects of Robert Walden,” *Bulletin of the Philadelphia Association for Psychoanalysis*, Vol. 18, No. 1, (March, 1968), p. 37.

† “Metaphors and Relationships,” *Family Process*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (September, 1964), p. 426.

frequently find it necessary or desirable, or both, to abandon their own specialized symbolic systems in favor of myth and metaphor. In certain instances the imagery is inherent. Dr. Lewis Thomas states: "Our most powerful story, equivalent in its way to a universal myth, is evolution. Never mind that it is true where myths are not; it is filled with symbolism, and this is the way it has influenced the mind of society."*

More frequently, however, especially in what we may call the "drier" sciences, the data must be purposefully poetized. In my paper *On the Nature of Time*, for example, I mentioned as apparently the strongest of the competing explanations of the origin of the universe the so-called "Big-Bang" theory.† Recently scientists at the Bell Laboratories detected a noise in their equipment which is believed to offer proof that the universe was indeed created in a huge explosion some ten to fifteen billion years ago. The noise was described as "*the lingering cry of the Universe at its birth.*"‡

Novelist Joyce Carol Oates has speculated optimistically that scientists will more and more frequently "take on the language of poetry in order to communicate human truths too mysterious for old-fashioned common sense."§ To the extent that science will continue to have among its goals *explanation*, as well as prediction, classification, and manipulation, it will be judged in part for its ability to *express* the universal aspects of things with which it deals. Thus, the metaphoric strength of a scientific explanation will be recognized as one of the criteria of scientific merit. The question, What makes a scientific theory or idea or investigation a successful or unsuccessful one? will in its expressive aspect be answered in terms similar to those which The Barnes Foundation has sought to answer with respect to a work of

* *The Lives of a Cell*, (Bantam Books, New York, 1974), p. 142.

† Gilbert M. Cantor, "On the Nature of Time," *The Barnes Foundation Journal of the Art Department*, Vol. III, No. 2, (Autumn, 1972), The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., p. 71.

‡ Warren Froelich, "Biggest 'Bang' of All," *The Sunday Bulletin*, Sept. 7, 1975, Section 1, p. 9.

§ Review of *The Lives of a Cell*, *The New York Times Book Review*, May 26, 1974, p. 2.

art. Only insofar as science is successful in its expressive aspect can it be utilized in the development of a unified world-picture, a picture which is essential to the development of a less alienated society.

But what of art? The "scientific method" may be permeated with esthetic drives and criteria, as we have seen, but is not art still the undisciplined opposite, pure emoting into evolving forms or containers, unbridled subjectivity in marketable doses?

This impression is wide of the mark, but brief reflection upon the sources of this error may help us correctly to perceive what actually takes place in artistic expression.

Again, the contrast with science will be helpful. While scientific inquiry of some sort was not unknown to the ancients, the development of modern science—the invention of the method of invention—is of relatively recent origin. Though rooted in human drives of major evolutionary worth, the method of modern science is a cultural attainment, an intellectual construct, dominated by our interest in the rational explanation of phenomena.

Esthetic expression, on the other hand, appears to be a basic, even primitive, human function. "The incredible productions of Upper Paleolithic sculptors and painters imply biological origins at least as ancient as those of speech—and probably also as common. In any case, anthropology has yet to discover a human society where art expression is unknown."*

Aside from this apparent "naturalness" of art in an historic or evolutionary sense, and as a special aspect of it in the analytic sense, we are misled in part by the direct personal satisfaction that works of art provide. As Ellen Homsey points out, scientific understanding of phenomena has to do with the external world as a separate entity, whereas esthetic understanding involves "the meanings the world has for us in our immediate, here-and-now experiencing of it."†

* Burnshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

† "Science and Art," *The Barnes Foundation Journal of The Art Department*, Vol. II, No. 1, (Spring, 1971), The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., p. 91.

“Art,” she continues, “. . . is concerned with *the reflexive power* of the expressive properties of things; its focus is on the meanings that evolve from the excitation of interest—in all its intellectual, emotional, and imaginative manifestations—by these expressive properties; and, thus, art provides the essential link between us and the outside world, for *it unites interest and expressiveness in one entity*.”* (Emphasis mine.)

Our response to “the reflexive power” (by which I assume Homsey means the power of things to call forth our response), especially the emotional phase of our response, yields a false inference that artistic *expression* is essentially or entirely subjective. In the immediacy and directness of our response, we ignore the fact that the aspects of phenomena which the work of art presents are subject to verification through observation and experience, and in that way objective, even where they are not susceptible of measurement as are certain data of the physical sciences. These objective elements are illustrated repeatedly in essays by Violette de Mazia published in this JOURNAL; for example:

If we were to stand together before the Modigliani painting . . . , we could all with equal objectivity account for what we saw on the area of the canvas—blue, brown, etc., color areas, various oval and angular shapes, areas of dark and areas of light, a rugged surface, a narrow dark band around the areas, slow curves as opposed to U-turns, parts of ovals, curves that are held in, taut, placed in sharp contrast to rectilinear elements, and so on.†

Again:

With the objective facts before him, (the student of art) can formulate any problem in terms which will be intelligible to another observer, elaborate whatever hypotheses may present themselves and find confirmation which not only satisfies him but is capable of commanding the assent of all those qualified to judge.‡

* *Ibid.*

† “Learning to See,” *The Barnes Foundation Journal of The Art Department*, Vol. III, No. 1, (Spring, 1972), The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., p. 14.

‡ “Method,” *ibid.*, Vol. I, No. 1, (Spring, 1970), p. 10.

It is also true, and may sometimes confuse the issue, that in the work of art, as distinguished from the scientific theory, we do seek, indeed require, the individuality of the artist to be evident. Thus the objects or characteristics of things which serve as the artist's point of departure become, in the creative process, ". . . of broader human interest by way of the painter's individuality, *his* feelings, *his* interest, *his* imagination."* Further: "The artist does not meaninglessly repeat what already exists: in one and the same act he shows what *it* really is, and what *he* is."† This personal impress, however, is but one characteristic of the artistic process and of the work of art; the part should not be confused with the whole. The artist does not depict indiscriminately whatever is before him; he selects and rejects in accordance with the requirements of his design.

The recent advent of the art museum afforded for the first time the opportunity to examine with virtual simultaneity a significant sampling of many works of visual art. It furnished the opportunity to verify again and again in the objects of art themselves the responses and the hypotheses on which an esthetic theory may be constructed. To this opportunity Dewey and Barnes brought their understanding and experience of the scientific method. They discovered and explained the material which can be found in the works of art, cutting away "romantic" responses which had become a part of esthetic theory over the centuries. They made it clear, once and forever, that the painter (for example) does not simply emote or imagine onto the canvas. They did this (1) by disclosing the special language(s) of the arts and (2) by explicating the esthetic process, a process which is not the same as the scientific method but is parallel to it in significant aspects.

The "reflexive power of the expressive properties of things" to which we alluded was enhanced by the advent of language in human evolution, wherein man learned to produce symbols or signs for actual objects or situations:

* Violette de Mazia, "What to Look for in Art," *ibid.*, Vol. I, No. 2, (Autumn, 1970), pp. 21-22.

† Albert C. Barnes, and Violette de Mazia, *The Art of Renoir*, (The Barnes Foundation Press, Merion, Pa., 1959), p. 25.

Through an unprecedented miracle of nature, our organism contrived to take the universe of its surroundings into itself, as it were, to incorporate it in its own neural tissues. A tree or a stream became a vocal sound. It became a spoken or written word, and a mechanism emerged that related us to our universe of external matter and energy through an entirely new system of receptivity and response.*

With the development of symbolic language, man came to live in a new dimension of reality, a symbolic universe. As Cassirer has pointed out, man has so enveloped himself in symbolic forms that he can no longer see or know anything except through this artificial medium. Symbols convey all of our knowledge and experience, and all of human culture is based on our symbolizing ability.

Dewey took pains to distinguish between general and specialized symbolic systems. The meanings of the former, represented by a system which is simply the language in common use, are coherent not because of the symbols' examined relationship to each other, their special fitness for the intended use, so to speak, but merely because they are current in the habits and expectations of the group. In a specialized symbolic system, such as the language of science, another criterion is added. Each meaning that enters into the system is expressly determined in relation to other members of that system. "In all reasoning or ordered discourse this criterion takes preference over that instituted by connection with cultural habits."†

In the erroneous concept of art as unbridled subjectivity, we would suppose its language (if recognized as such) to be a general symbolic system, conforming to nothing more stringent than the interests and customs of a particular culture or tradition. Actually, art has *languages* which are specialized symbolic systems. "For each art has its own medium and that medium is especially fitted for one kind of communication."‡

* Attributed to Trigant Burrow in Burnshaw, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

† From John Dewey, *Logic, The Theory of Inquiry*, Chapter 3, reprinted in *Man and Culture*, Donald P. Voene, ed., (Dell Publishing Company, New York, 1970), p. 224.

‡ John Dewey, *Art as Experience*, (Minton, Balch & Company, New York, 1934), p. 106.

When the painter uses certain colors to make a unit on the canvas, he arranges or orders them for the purpose of expressing specific meanings. If we are to understand what the artist has stated in this unit, we must know "that it is written in, it speaks, it communicates by way of, the artist-painter's language."* We may learn to know, for example, that a particular unit in a Cézanne painting says—in the artist's language—peach, volume, solidity, weightiness, and perhaps other things as well.

What the artist chooses to express through his particular symbolic system, of course, does not merely appear, by luck or by accident, in the form of a work of art. It gets there by a particular process which, as we have said, is not the same as the "scientific method" but is somewhat analogous to it.

While the development of the scientific method was *per se* the invention of modern science, the esthetic process is not a modern intellectual construct, and, by reason of erroneous assumptions as to the subjective-emotive nature of creativity, it long escaped articulation, especially with respect to the non-verbal arts. The esthetic process, with its rough scientific analogue, may be described in this way:

Working in (but not bound exclusively to) a particular *tradition* of art (comparable to the paradigm of the scientist), the artist chooses a *subject* (as the scientist selects the problem or question which he will seek to resolve).

As the scientist develops his hypothesis, or tentative solution, the artist conceives a *design*, which constitutes the general plot or handling of the various details of the work. "A design is an intention, usually understood as including some idea of the means to be employed for its realization."†

The execution of the work is like the experiment which either supports or contradicts the hypothesis of the scientist. The result, the painting or other object, may be judged by the principle, among others, of unity, which "requires that everything needed to produce conviction, to make the kind

* Violette de Mazia, "Learning to See," *op. cit.*, p. 15.

† Albert C. Barnes, *The Art in Painting*, *supra*, p. 14.

and degree of reality prescribed by the design, be included; nothing less, but nothing more.”*

The scientist's hypothesis, if validated experimentally, becomes a theory. The artist's design, if validated under the applicable esthetic principle, is a *work of art*, a creation wherein the artist has discovered for us not a formula to be used for calculation or prediction, but rather those qualities of things that heighten their human significance.

Moreover, having noted that esthetic considerations played a significant and sometimes crucial role in scientific advance, we shall also recognize that science plays a comparable role in the esthetic process. The involvement of science and its handmaiden, technology, will be fairly obvious at certain levels, for example, the need of the architect to study physics, the need of the classical sculptor to study anatomy, the creative opportunities afforded through the development of new materials, tools, and instruments. Beyond that, the influence of science and technology upon the subject matter (the handling of the subject in terms of the plastic means employed by the artist) of art is familiar to students of Cubism and its offshoots—Futurism, Collage, and Constructivism. Indeed, there can be no surprise in this: anyone who has tried to walk out of step with the marching band while following a parade will understand the plight of the artist who would paint without reference to the forces by which his world is being transformed. The world has been changed, our perception of the world and of ourselves in it has been changed, and it remains for the artist to discover and depict those qualities of the cultural world-stuff which heighten its significance for altered humanity.

Let us pause at this point to recapitulate. In comparing science and art, we noted certain basic similarities:

Each speaks to us in its own languages, which are specialized symbolic systems.

Each has a characteristic method or process, but in neither case can the articulated method or process by itself account fully for the achievement.

* *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Both are ways of knowing the world in which we live and of presenting its reality in such a way as to enrich our perception of it and to reshape it in forms closer to human desires.

Each reveals, however, not a separate objective reality, but its symbolic knowledge or perception of the thing portrayed.

Moreover, beyond the similarities of art and science, we have observed that each stimulates and facilitates the development of the other in significant ways.

At the same time, while recording the similarities and the symbiosis of science and art, we must not blind ourselves to their essential differences. The most important distinction is that the knowledge of things that science seeks to discover is knowledge of the laws that govern the universe and its processes, whereas art seeks to present the aspects of the world which are meaningful or satisfying in our direct human experience of it. Thus, science seeks to portray the universe primarily in its *otherness*, and the scientific perception is fundamentally alienating. Art apprehends reality in a unifying mode; it is a path to integration and wholeness.

Unfortunately, the power of science and the power of art in our culture are vastly disproportionate. Moreover, the science and technology which have succeeded in banishing certain diseases and in transporting sleek vessels into outer space have also facilitated certain horrors which are best known by the names of the places where they were enacted. Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen. Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The human values inherent in the nature and progress of science, essential though they may be, are plainly insufficient for the maintenance of civilization. Crucial, indeed, are the human values which are expressed in art. Essential, therefore, are the development of an understanding of the reciprocal roles of science and art in the human adventure and their integration into a unified, or at least co-ordinate, world view.

Perhaps a key to the unification of the human cognitive enterprise lies in the development of three related concepts on which we have touched in the course of this discussion: the fundamental unity of all existence in energy; the perception of reality as inseparable from experience; and the

recognition of symbol, metaphor, and myth as a continuum through which all experienced reality is represented.

Since neither words nor numbers nor color areas can be the “thing,” the simplest, plain, blunt statement is *per se* metaphoric. At the same time, the most fanciful myth is true to the degree it deepens understanding and compels assent. And these statements apply to science and art without distinction.

A word, in this view, is a proto-metaphor, a sound or visual representation of a sound replacing some “thing” or aspect of experience, just as a metaphor in the traditional sense supplies a new image in place of a more common term, while the myth provides a story by which phenomena are imaginatively “explained.” The elements which Sonne ascribes to metaphor—surprise, similarity, contrast, relationship, power—are also involved, in varying degrees, in symbol and myth, which are in this view micro- and macro-metaphoric.

We can say of reality, which has been called man’s most powerful myth, what Martin Buber said of “meaning”—that we do not find it lying in things, nor do we put it into things, but between us and things it can happen. Reality happens for us in metaphor. The “truth” of our knowledge of reality lies in the authenticity of our metaphor—that is, that knowledge is true whose metaphor can be verified or authenticated in experience, whether by repetition of experiment or by checking out prediction or by recreating in ourselves the artist’s expression of his experience.

The mind of man, which is energy conscious of itself, explores our experience of the universe in its temporal and spatial dimensions and re-presents it in symbol, metaphor, and myth. Reality-haunted, we do science and make art and philosophize about the purposes of each. In this pursuit it is ourselves we seek. But in ourselves, reality its groping image finds.

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Naïveté

(Notes and Observations)

by VIOLETTE DE MAZIA*

THERE is a Russian proverb which states: "To a worm in a radish, the radish, *his* radish, is the whole world." The worm of that proverb epitomizes what we mean by naïveté. That is to say, the term does not merely indicate a manner of doing, but embraces personality, attitude, understanding as a whole.

What is the criterion of naïveté? The word itself, borrowed from the French, derives from the Latin "nativus," which stands for "native," "inborn" or "natural," *i.e.*, not artificial but ingenuous, unselfconscious, straightforward and unaffected. And we readily apply the term to describe the actions, expressions and personality of the child. There are also artists and traditions, such as that of folk art, which are called naïve. A religious practitioner is thought of by some as naïve. A liar, a crook or a criminal, too, is naïve who against all odds believes that he can "get away with it." Naïve also, unfortunately, is many a present-day youth who talks of living his life in an ideal, no-responsibility and non-competitive world. Similarly, on occasion, may a politician, a businessman, a lawyer, an educator be said to be naïve, as, for that matter, may anyone whose beliefs, activities and manner of conducting his social transactions seem to lack a thoroughgoing connection with what is generally viewed as "reality."

What, then, to rephrase our question, is the personality trait shared by so heterogeneous an assortment of individuals as the above-cited that allows us to group them under the common heading of "naïve?" Ignoring other possible

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explanations, and perhaps revealing our own naïveté, we contend that naïveté essentially consists in blind faith accepted and pursued according to one's own private and unselfconscious, self-serving logic.

To avoid confusion, it should be established at the outset that naïveté is not ignorance *per se*, nor is it stupidity, ineptitude or inaptitude. Ignorance is an absolute lack of knowledge or experience and therefore irrelevant to any assessment of the character of a person's beliefs, attitudes and manner of thought. Stupidity is merely a defect in intelligence or in ability to put separate pieces of knowledge together. In ineptitude any sense of reasoning is absent, and in inaptitude it is the capacity for learning and the ability to do—*i.e.*, technical talent—that are nonexistent. These are of a negative nature, whereas naïveté, when unpolluted by stupidity, is, as we shall see, of a positive character: what it knows, it knows very well; it functions with intelligence and reasons with clarity; it is receptive to knowledge, though it does not seek it out, and is potentially talented and capable of worthwhile achievements, all nonetheless within the boundaries of its own relatively circumscribed focus of interest and attention and according to its own tenacious, reassuring and self-comforting ratiocination.

The actions of a child in his response to the world about him may provide us with basic clues for understanding the specific implications of our statement about the nature of naïveté. The child who, for instance, sticks his finger in the flame of a candle for the first time is ignorant: he is not aware of the fact that flame burns. The child who, after having been burned once or twice by the flame, again sticks his finger in it is stupid: he fails to connect the flame to the burned finger; reasoning has not taken place. On the other hand, the child who attempts to boil water by holding the kettle over the candle flame is naïve: he knows and makes use of his knowledge that heat makes water boil, and he knows, too, and again makes use of his knowledge, that a candle flame makes heat; he has reasoned it out and acts accordingly and, as far as his knowledge goes, intelligently. In truth, he may eventually succeed in bringing to boil a

few drops of water at a time; that is to say, the result of his action is not negative.

On the basis of our analogue of the child, we may further note about the naïve person that what he knows suffices him completely; he is not intellectually inquisitive, not a researcher—if he were he would not be naïve—and he engages in no peripheral thinking: children, like the worm in the radish, first and unavoidably perceive the world exclusively in terms of their own backyard. This is, of course, meant in a relative way. The naïve child, the naïve artist do investigate and inquire, but within restricted areas. Consciously or not, the naïve person establishes limits to his perception and arrives at conclusions, makes pronouncements, acts as if his limited perceptions encompassed *all* there is to perceive in a given field. He is content that what he knows is all that he needs, and he is not even aware that there is more to know, hence does not know that he does not know (just try questioning a child on literal grounds about his presentation of a face). He makes quick, uncontrived decisions and is happy in his answers. He has faith in himself, however blind be that faith. In short, naïveté reveals itself as an essentially childlike perceptiveness, a credulousness, a candid spontaneity.

There is, however, an important difference in this respect between the naïveté of a child and that of an adult. The child does not know and does not know that he does not know, and the reason he does not know is that his experience is limited. The adult who is naïve likewise does not know that he does not know, but he, and not the child, has the opportunity to explore, to find out and to know. However, having retained the child's attitude, he ignores those opportunities and remains in a one-to-one (he-to-it) kind of relationship with the world, allowing for no real depth of thinking or subtlety of observation to develop.

Thus, we may enlarge upon our original observation about the nature of naïveté to note that it is, in general, associated with and reflective of a limited degree of awareness, albeit some awareness, and a relative lack of pertinent information, yet some pertinent information. To make this

more specific, let us think of the young child* and his understanding of the world around him as he embodies it in his drawings and paintings.† The picture reproduced on Plate 68 done by a seven-year old and the picture by a five-year old on Plate 72 reflect the child's naïve personality in that they show that he observed within his powers and drew quick conclusions: a face is a roundish shape; a nose comes down or is in the middle of that shape; a mouth goes across that shape somewhere below the nose. And who can deny the accuracy of these facts? Indeed, the child is not the only one to see a face as a roundish shape with a "thing" down the middle and another "thing" across the lower part. Klee, in "This Flower Wishes to Fade" (Plate 63), chose

* We do not have in mind the child who has not yet outgrown the "scribbling" or kinesthetic stage in his development—the two- to four-year old stage—when the child's "scribbles" are but extensions, so to speak, of uncontrolled, spontaneous movements of his arm and hand (*e.g.*, Plate 75). The "scribbles" do not embody meanings of the child's responses to his environment, and the question of naïveté, therefore, does not enter. About this child's "pictures," we venture to comment that "what the four-year old kid does is just like what some adult, present-day painters do."

† These, incidentally, should not, as they usually are, be referred to as children's "art"; they are no more art than the child's babblings are literature or his banging on tin cans music. Not having lived long enough, the young child, with rare exceptions, has not developed whatever aesthetic sensitivity may be latent in him, and his naïve expression, for all its appeal, is more often than not but crude and unorganized illustration. By the same token, it should be remarked that, contrary to popular supposition, neither is naïveté to be equated with art, a confusion that arises from calling youngsters' drawings and paintings art. This is not, of course, to say that naïveté may not be present as one of the qualities in a work that is art, but that naïveté itself does not alone impart aesthetic merit to the piece.

What, then, of folk art, which is, in the character of its simplicity, so reminiscent of the efforts of the child? Here the use of the qualifying term "art" is justified on the same general grounds that it is with reference to the collective work of any group of painters—as, for instance, the Venetians, the Florentines, the Impressionists and so on—in that it represents a visual tradition (in a later issue of the JOURNAL, we plan to discuss "Tradition"—its source, its nature and its significance), albeit, in the case of folk art, a tradition rooted in symbols transmitted from one generation to another with little or no change and peculiar to a region and to an ethnic group of self-taught, untutored painters. Hence, unlike the work of the child and despite the fact that an individual example is or is not art by virtue of its specific attributes, folk art as a whole, like any tradition, is based on a body of aesthetic ideas that remains constant to an identifiable group of practitioners. Furthermore, the aesthetic ideas of a folk culture are inherited from the original tradition from which that culture extends. Thus, in the New-Mexico

similar attributes to depict a face, and the man's features in Matisse's "The Riffian" (Plate 78) are hardly more completely delineated. In none of these instances do we challenge the facts presented as a face. But we may observe that, in the case of the child and not in that of Klee or Matisse, what is shown is all that is known. That is, the child believes that that is all that these things—a face, a nose, a mouth—are; in fact, he *knows* that that is what they are, for he has looked at other faces and come to the same conclusions.

In this context, we reprint here appropriate excerpts from the comparison, made in our essay "Learning to See" in the Spring, 1972, issue of the JOURNAL,* of the drawing of the nose in the child's picture on Plate 68, Detail Plate 71, with that of the same feature in Matisse's "The Riffian" (Plate 78, Detail Plate 70), which artist, in the opinion of many, including some "art critics," paints, draws "just like my seven-year old."

If what we know of Matisse [in, for example, "The Riffian"] is only the fact that he uses bright colors, flat areas, grotesque distortions, things "out of drawing" . . . his work is for us, as it is for many who have not learned to see but think to themselves that they have, just like what our little sister does. . . . What critics [who make such an assertion] fail to see is that Matisse, in his distortions, indicates that he

Santo reproduced on Plate 81 we find the kind of bold pattern and simplification and the dramatic black-and-white effect of bright colors that were present in its Spanish-Mexican-American Indian source; the Pennsylvania "Dutch" painting on Plate 29 retains such specific characteristics of the Rhineland tradition in which the Pennsylvania "Dutch" tradition originated as the stress on the decorativeness of line and color and the generally florid compositional elements; and in the Pennsylvania "Dutch" "Two Young Women," shown on Plate 56, we recognize the peculiarly Germanic combination of heaviness with delicacy or daintiness.

Folk art, in general, is more conscious, we might say, of what it should portray than are the pictures made by children; but, as in the child's efforts, its naïveté derives less from the nature of its subject than from the character of its conception and of the means employed to objectify it. From this, it should be clear that neither Peter Breughel the Elder's paintings (*e.g.*, Plate 34) nor Fellini's films (*e.g.*, "Juliet of the Spirits") can be considered folk art—as, at times, they erroneously are—just because their *subjects* involve everyday scenes and everyday—or even country—folks; and if they could be so designated, then the still lifes of Cézanne, Renoir *et al.* would have to be termed "grocer's art."

* p. 12.

knows what . . . a whole nose is, from which he selected what he wanted; the child shows all he knows and believes that a nose is. Matisse shows, moreover, that he knows the traditions (the Coptic, the Byzantine, Japanese woodcut prints, the contributions of Manet, Cézanne, *et al.*), from which he likewise selected what he wanted, whereas the child reveals the fact that he is limited in such knowledge mainly to what he has observed in children's books and the work of other children. A Matisse picture may be childlike in its overall appearance; the child's is childish.

To this we may add that, with all the straightforwardness of its simplified drawing, the nose in "The Riffian" is, in fact, a complete and accurate statement: the line marking off the nostrils and the vertical linear highlight helping to draw the bony substructure each describes expressively more—*that* nose. Nothing is superfluous, and we require nothing more than what is given. To a naïve spectator, however, to many an "art critic," Matisse's sophisticated expression of that nose is nothing more and nothing less than some linear elements which, "just as in the seven-year old's" drawing, come down the middle of the face and stand for "nose." Like the child, then, this naïve spectator lacks the knowledge Matisse had of a whole nose, from which he judiciously selected what the intent of his picture required. The child's line, in contrast, gives only what it is—a wiggly pattern on the flat surface of the shape of the face, with a bare reference to the illustrative identity it is meant to convey—and, in doing so, carries out the child's intent. But all the other facts that would materially qualify and make these facts of a human face specific for the non-naïve are lacking.*

* We might also compare the dab of red used by the five-year old kid (see Plate 72) to say what he believes a nose is and the dabs that say "nose" in Manet's "Head of Girl" (Plate 73): in the first, the viewer is to read "nose" into the dab, for, in itself, all it is and says is a dab of color placed somewhere where a nose might be; in the Manet, each dab was given just the shape, the size, the tone and the location which, despite extreme simplifications of and departures from the anatomy of a nose, do say "nose." Manet simplified what he knew a complete nose to be; but the dab in the child's naïve depiction is not the simplification of a nose known more completely: it is what to the child *is* the complete nose. Here, again, the difference is not a matter of not knowing or not knowing how-to, but a matter of the child's naïve, and Manet's perceptive, experience.

Although, as we have mentioned, the naïve person displays a comparative lack of inquisitiveness, he is by no means deficient in imagination, despite the fact that in this regard, too, he functions within definite limitations. The child who paints a black or a yellow snowman (Plate 79), or the artist Horace Pippin who, with a sensitivity, an inventiveness, a technical ability and imaginative powers superior to those of a child, gives his "Christ and the Woman of Samaria" (Plate 14) a bizarre, stark black-white-mauve-pink color scheme, does not lose his naïveté because his picture facts are, known to him or not, no longer accurate. Indeed, distortion, purposive distortion, occurs in the work of naïve painters equally as much as it does in the work of the non-naïve. Matisse's "The Riffian" (Plate 78) and Klee's "This Flower Wishes to Fade" (Plate 63), as previously said, even show some of the distortions typical of children's pictures, although Matisse and Klee as artists are not at all naïve.

What characterizes the distortions of the naïve and distinguishes them from those of the non-naïve is that they are done for the sake of the sheer enjoyment of the effect achieved.* They answer to a "homemade" logic, formulated without the burden of school training or traditional conceptions, and are acceptable on the sole basis that that is the way the painter likes what he paints to be. Against this, the non-naïve is open to definite influences, so that his expressive ideas, his perceptions and the breadth of his interest are developed to a far higher degree, and his distortions, therefore, are invariably subsidiary to and dependent upon the expressive intent of his work. The distortions of the naïve, in contrast, tend to be done for their own sake, *i.e.*, because of their immediate effect and/or, because of the particular limitations of his perception, with consistent indifference to logical relationships and relative scale. Thus, for example, there is among naïve painters the common tendency to scale objects in narratives or landscapes according to their

* The young child dresses up, embellishes, his paper with his drawing as the little girl dresses up, makes pretty, her doll.

relative importance rather than to the "laws" of perspective (*e.g.*, Plates 12 and 18) or the tendency to settle upon a way of presenting facial features or other illustrative facts and to repeat that way in every instance of their occurrence, without further research or observation (*e.g.*, Plates 11 and 18)—again, the way of doing taking precedence over or determining what is said, rather than the means, the technique, being subjugated to the aesthetic intent. In short, naïveté has to do more with the conception and presentation of the means than with their character as plastic tools in the service of expression.

Admittedly, it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between naïveté and a not-knowing-how-to, *i.e.*, a technical incompetence or lack of experience *per se*. A youthful dancer under training, for instance, may convey a quality of awkward gracefulness which might be taken for naïveté just because he has reached only a certain level of coordination, a certain sense of the coherence of a diverse series of movements, a certain notion of fluidity in moving from one posture to another. His understanding of the expressive possibilities of the medium is, of course, far below that of a mature, thoroughly knowledgeable, experienced and sensitive dancer. He is, however, attempting to dance in the manner shown him by his tutor: to the best of his ability he tries to make arms, legs and body move as he understands they should move, even though he cannot yet make them do so. Hence, the simplicity of his inherent limitations and of his lack of mastery has the clumsiness of a dancer who does not know as yet *how* to execute the steps, who has not yet acquired the ability of making his angular elbows fit into the curve of his raised arms and, in general, of moving gracefully. But this is not the simplicity of naïveté. The dancing student may be awkward until he reaches technical mastery, but he is not the child in the street who dances in the only way he knows and in the only way he believes there is to know. Along the same line of thought, the stutterer is not, for all his speech difficulty, necessarily naïve, nor is the person who has not mastered the vocabulary, grammar and syntax of the language in which he tries to formulate his ideas.

The child, then, is naïve not because he as yet knows little or because he does not know “how to,” but because the little he knows is, in his belief, all there is to know. He knows not as yet how to investigate beyond the limits or level of his experience and perception, and he is blind to and fails to apprehend the fact that there exists a whole world outside his to be investigated. In addition, although he looks no further, he draws conclusions from his experiences, and these conclusions are to him all-encompassing and invulnerable. In other words, and in contrast to the dancing student in our example above, the naïve child does not attempt to say or to do what he does not know how to say or do. What he does, what he says fully satisfy him. Indeed, he has complete faith in his beliefs, in his knowledge and in the rightness of the statements which his actions, his dancing, his drawing make. The drawing shown on Plate 68, done by a seven-year old, is a straightforward, ingenuous statement of how a young girl standing is to be represented and what she means to the one who made the drawing. There is a sureness in the line, in the definition of shapes. With no fumbling, the child gives everything a decisive identity, the identity it has for her. In contrast to this naïve presentation, the “Self-Portrait” reproduced on Plate 69, also by a seven-year old, while still in the main the child’s own representation of a girl, indicates in the handling of the outstretched hand on the right that here she tried to do in the best way she could what she had been told a hand is and, therefore, how it should be drawn—five fingers, a thumb bent outward and so on—and she fumbled and failed. And, although her teacher or mama may be gratified by the presence of the five fingers and thumb, the child is more likely to have been thwarted and confused: before she was to draw that hand, she knew what she was doing, which mama or teacher probably did not; now mama or teacher knows what the child is trying, under compulsion, to do, but she, the child, no longer knows why she draws the hand in the way that she does, except to please mama or teacher. The faith she had had in *her* representation of a hand has been shaken, shattered—“*le joujou est cassé*” (the toy is broken, or Santa Claus has been unmasked). That hand, we might say, is an anachro-

nism: it is premature for that child's naïve investigation of the world and her naïve findings and conclusions. The drawing of the hand is no longer straightforwardly childish, but awkwardly precocious and clumsy, since the child has not yet mastered the skill required for drawing such a hand. Naïveté has passed over into something else—technical incompetence. The distinction, then, between naïveté and not-knowing-how-to is a matter of personality, of outlook, as against a lack of skill in presentation.

Even the non-naïve, the sophisticated, may remain naïve in fields other than the one he has become expert in or in aspects of his attitude towards his own field. Often this occurs because he is sophomorically overconfident of knowledge but poorly informed and psychologically immature. For whatever cause, to the extent that the adult retains his faith in what he *believes*, yet does not know for a fact what things are—to that extent he is naïve. Thus was Albert Einstein totally sophisticated in his work as a scientist, yet remarkably naïve, indeed, notoriously so, in his handling of his everyday responsibilities. Tilly Losch, who has been described as highly sophisticated in the dance but naïve in her painting (*e.g.*, Plate 76), is, on the other hand, an example less of adult naïveté than of an instance of a crude, unskilled technique employed to express some mature, non-naïve concept. The politician who, in the face of inevitable failure, campaigns for election, believing that wishing will make it so, and is surprised at his defeat is naïve.* His faith, according to which he acts, like the child's, is blind to facts as they are; and he, too, knows only what he believes is all he should or all there is to know in a particular sphere. His kind of naïveté may also be qualified by wishful thinking or daydreaming, a first cousin to naïveté, as when the self-assurance he entertains amounts to a kind of defiant bravura, a bravado or braggadocio—to wit, Don Quixote engaging the windmills in battle.

In the same category is the above-mentioned naïveté of the liar and the criminal who believe that they can

* Harold Stassen, for instance, although no one but himself takes him seriously any more, in 1976 again sought the presidential nomination, despite the fact that he had suffered thrashing defeat after thrashing defeat since he first began campaigning in 1948.

“get away with it.” In their cases, however, and perhaps also in that of the politician but not of the child, the perpetrator knows what might cause his downfall, but either chooses to ignore it, or else his faith in himself is so blind as to make him blind to the existence of anything that might thwart him. So, in this sense, is the ostrich naïve when, as danger threatens, it buries its head in the ground. Likewise in this group belong the writer and lecturer on art and the layman spectator in a museum who rave in words and gestures over this or that painting without knowing the first thing about what makes or fails to make it a work of art: one and the other is naïve, though naïveté in these circumstances may well be the wrong term and stupidity the correct one.

The fact must be conceded that in practical affairs, because of the nature of what might be at stake and of possible consequences, there is, more often than not, but a fine line, if a line at all, marking off naïveté from sheer, unqualified stupidity. A stupidly naïve or naïvely stupid mayor of a city or governor of a state or president of an organization can, indeed, be a dangerous liability, a serious threat to the cause he is expected to serve. Our reaction to the activities of these men is to deplore and condemn their stupidity and perhaps also to laugh *at* the naïveté that led to their incompetence; whereas, in our response to naïveté untainted by stupidity, our tendency is to smile *with* and to enjoy it as it strikes a chord of warm kinship within us. Molière’s Agnès remains forever in our hearts.

Just as the technically inept is not for his lack of know-how naïve, so the technically accomplished does not for all his know-how automatically become non-naïve. Indeed, he may be thoroughly naïve with regard to his attitude towards his technique and his art. We think, for example, of painters like Henri Rousseau, John Kane, Horace Pippin and other “primitives,”* as they are also sometimes called,

* The term “primitive” as used in the field of art is ambiguous in that it has served to designate quite different phenomena. On some occasions, it describes the self-taught or untutored, for all intents and purposes naïve, painter and his work, regardless of when he lived. Under this meaning, the term embraces with equal applicability Henri Rousseau (*e.g.*, Plate 87) of the nineteenth century and the Sienee painter of “Madonna and Child” (Plate

who as individuals retain in their adulthood the outlook of the child, though they do not lack mature skill in making the means function to do things beyond what a child could conceive of or make them do. Because, however, for reasons of inclination or opportunity, they failed to acquaint themselves with traditions or with ideas that would show them possible meanings of actuality different from but as valid as their own and because the ideas they do express are primarily self-motivated or provincial, they have, as it were,

80) of the fifteenth. At other times, it refers solely to painters and their work that belong to static, non-evolving cultures—*e.g.*, Haitian or African—or to an early period in art's development—*e.g.*, the fifteenth century—whether such men were naïve in their paintings or not. Thus, under this usage are the Sienese painter referred to above and his sophisticated contemporary in Flanders Jan van Eyck (*e.g.*, Plate 41) both considered primitive. The term may also be used to specify the work of artists which initiates a new stage in the evolution of the traditions, as, for example, that of Cézanne. In the above text, we have, of course, used the designation "primitive" in the first of the listed possible meanings.

A separate case is to be made for the "primitive" artists working in the Byzantine and the early Renaissance tradition who portrayed scenes from the Scriptures. Their apparent naïveté was forced upon them by the belief of the times that holy figures and their settings should not be represented in the way that the painters would have observed human beings, etc., to be. Hence, like the child, *i.e.*, like the naïve painter in general, they painted not what they saw in the life around them, but what they knew or thought they knew that faces, hands, draperies, etc., were. In the instance of the early painters, however, the simplified representations became stylized conventions, types—that is, types of face, hand, drapery—made to function as symbols or concepts and were, correspondingly, repeated with little alteration either within a painting (see, for example, the pointed oval face, the long nose, the high-placed "oriental" eyes of the Madonna and of the angels in the Sienese painting reproduced on Plate 80) or from painting to painting executed by the same or by various artists at the same or different places and times (see, for example, the tilt of the Madonna's head, the facial features, the drawing of the hand with the "squared" space between thumb and fingers and the angularity of the drapery's edge around the Madonna's face in the pictures reproduced on Plates 82, 83, 84 and 85). The fact is that, instead of availing themselves of the opportunity to study and observe the appearance of figures and things as they were around them, the painters then relied, as do also those who through the centuries down to the present have continued to work in that tradition, on the manner of doing, the types or symbols created by their predecessors (as demonstrated in Plates 82, 83, 84 and 85, which show works done in the fourteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—one originating from Perugia, the others from Siena, the Italo-Byzantine style and the Balkans). Naïveté, therefore, in these instances, while undeniably present, is enforced by the times or the specific circumstances and beliefs and does not necessarily reflect any naïveté in the makeup of the artists.

read only one book, seen only one backyard, yet to their satisfaction have read it all or seen it all. This characteristic complacency or faith of the naïve in what he knows was concisely expressed by Henri Rousseau when he claimed for himself the position of being the first and only true “realist.”

Nor is this attitude, and its consequences as revealed in the work produced by naïve artists, a failing in its own right. For, while naïveté, as we earlier observed, is not in itself a quality of art, it is a quality, like power, gentleness, etc., that art can express. When, on the other hand, the naïveté is assumed, as is the pseudo-naïveté of some of the Surrealists—a pose adopted to support their claim that their work is generated spontaneously out of the unconscious—or of painters like Tilly Losch (*e.g.*, Plate 76)—who cultivate a primitivism, an “innocence” in their efforts in order to cover ineptitude—then the results are mere imitation, empty of genuine personality or significance as art. Naïveté engages in no play-acting: it is frank, open and honest.

The genuinely naïve artists, such as Henri Rousseau (*e.g.*, Plates 53 and 87), Jean Baptiste Guiraud (*e.g.*, Plate 20), John Kane (*e.g.*, Plate 12), Horace Pippin (*e.g.*, Plate 14), among numerous others, are, unlike the pseudo-naïve painters and their cultivated primitivism, completely sincere in what they say, what they do and how they say and do, and they do not, as do the pseudo-naïves, pretend to be what they are not. With these “primitives,” self-taught and untutored, it may happen as it did with the child who, when asked how he came to draw his picture, said that he “thought of something and then drew a line around the ‘think’.” In the case of both the child and the primitive, the illustrative aspect is of prime concern: one and the other gives portraits, we might say, of what they believe they know that their physical world is like. Descriptive details of their individual choosing tend, as a rule, to be exaggerated at the expense of others and to override such concerns as linear and aerial perspective and the plastic interrelationships among the picture’s components. Henri Rousseau, for instance, by having *seen* but not *observed*, knows that interwoven osiers or other pliable twigs make up a basket and that trees are composed of individual leaves (*e.g.*,

Plate 87). Guiraud, in like fashion, knows that buildings have windows and doors and roofs, that ships have masts, that figures have a certain general shape (*e.g.*, Plate 20). Likewise was the painter of "Houses and Canal" (Plate 19) acquainted with the fact that walls are made of individual stones and so on. For these artists, the "knowledge" they have of how things in the world are put together replaces genuine observation. Rousseau, then, goes about painting every twig in the basket and delineating and exaggerating the size of every leaf; Guiraud does not miss a single mast—and perhaps adds to their number—or window or roof; the French painter of "Houses and Canal" makes sure that every single stone is clearly shown; and John Kane, in, for example, "Children in the Field" (Plate 12), commands every flower on the lawn and paints an on-the-spot portrait of each one—all this in the naïve painter, as in the child, whether or not these twigs, masts, windows, stones or flowers could have been perceived as individually marked-off shapes in real life, affected as they would be by the action of linear and aerial perspective and incidental distortions due to their location in space—and what we call naïveté, then, prevails.*

The adult, of course, can draw from a wider field of experiences than can the child. His imagination, therefore, can be exercised within a larger sphere, and he has had more opportunities to refine his technical skill in terms both of its appropriateness to his intent and of the subtlety in his control of it.

* This aspect of naïveté is not to be confused with the Cubists' pictorial distortions that stem from their painting what they know to be there but cannot see while they paint—a frontal view of an eye, for instance, on a profiled face or the bottle with its uncentered stopper at the right in "Violin and Bottle" (Plate 74) by Picasso, who defended its distortion by saying, in effect, "Well, I don't understand why I can't add the side of the bottle, which I know exists even though I cannot see it, to the width of its front." The difference between the approach of the naïves and the Cubists is, of course, much the same as that between the child's and Matisse's handling of the unit of the nose in their respective pictures described earlier in the text. What the Cubists paint that they know exists but do not see, they know from having observed and not from merely believing that they know. They, the Cubists, the non-naïve in general, select; the child, the naïve, decides.

Of greater significance, however, than the relative technical and imaginative powers in differentiating the naïve picture of the adult artist from that of the immature youngster is the fact that in the work of the artist we may look for and find a sense of coherence in the compositional organization of the subject matter, an overall plastic theme, a concordance in the qualities and functions of the individual means employed, subtleties in the relationships established and in the broad human values expressed, a more complex imagination and greater, more precise or distinctive personality—in short, aesthetic qualities as part and parcel of the predominantly decorative-illustrative aspect. Indeed, whereas one child's picture can easily be mistaken for another child's, a painting by Henri Rousseau, as an example of a mature naïve artist, is so convincingly personalized by Rousseau's own subtlety in color relationships and patterning rhythms in deep space that it cannot be thought to have been painted by anyone but Rousseau. The same is true of Pippin and *his* stark, dramatic contrasts and of John Kane and *his* tellingly distorted proportions and of Guiraud and, again, *his* mechanical-toy figures and blue-print attitude towards factual details. The work of these artists, that is, owes its particular identity to the individual man's perception and imagination rather than to any direct contact each might have had with the work of other artists in the traditions. An affinity with one or another tradition may, however, well be present, as, indeed, it most frequently is in regard to the early Florentine by way of the clarity of space, the clean-cut outline and the color compartmentality usually found in primitive paintings.

There are, of course, painters who are by no means primitive, who have a strong and deep grounding in the traditions, yet still retain an element of naïveté in some of their creative statements. Among these, Cézanne is a case in point. He often struggled with a medium he could not always control to express what are, in fact, highly developed aesthetic ideas of weightiness, drama and power. At the same time, his work on frequent occasions possesses an undeniable naïveté—not because of his “stuttering,” *i.e.*, the technical difficulty he often had in making his medium do his bidding,

but because, like the child, of the personal logic he followed in his conceptions of the world and of his means. His view of the medium in believing that layer upon layer of thick impasto will mean three-dimensional solidity, as evidenced in his early work (*e.g.*, Plate 31),* and the straightforward, somewhat crudely obvious drawing and the awkward proportioning and uncouth positioning of figures (*e.g.*, Plate 15) reflect an unsophisticated limitation of perception and of experience in the world.†

Utrillo (*e.g.*, Plate 77), naïve also only in certain aspects, shows none of the deficiency in technical proficiency to be found in Cézanne, yet, like a child who cannot portray people but as sticks with circles for heads, paints the same relatively stereotyped figure with the same sort of arbitrarily delineating distortions: women's figures bulge at the hips and bosom, and so they repeatedly and only do in Utrillo's pictures.

And van Gogh, perhaps more thoroughly naïve when he preached about religion to the Belgian miners or about art to his friend Gauguin than generally when he painted, nevertheless frequently reveals a naïve attitude towards his subject, regardless of the fact that he presents it with complete technical efficiency. His "Nude" (Plate 16), for example, a sophisticated topic as such, has all the candor, the impudent effrontery and the *sarà quel che sarà* (what will be, will be) insouciance of the kid who blurts it all out and gives not a thought to possible remonstrances. And naïve is van Gogh also in "Postman" (Plate 62), with its categorical frontality and the blunt delineation of the facial features, beard, buttons, etc.

* "It took me twenty years," Cézanne is quoted as having said, "to learn that painting is not sculpture."

† The fact that Cézanne did not have actual figures pose for his paintings of nudes does not account for this awkwardness. Instead, what does is that, when confronted with a figure, in actuality or in other painters' works, he, again like the child, saw what his limited perception and ready, unreasoned conclusions allowed him to see or to imagine that he saw and which, accordingly, he knows and makes use of in his picture.

We should point out that Cézanne's awkwardness is a positive rather than a negative value in his work, suggesting, as it does, something of the naïveté of the earthy poetry of the Bible.

Again, in the work of Maurice Prendergast (*e.g.*, Plate 11) and that of his brother Charles (*e.g.*, Plates 17 and 18), we recognize the childish elements responsible for the naïve flavor of their drawing and shaping of figures or boats or houses or trees, yet find no clumsiness in the handling of their means: the directly stated facts have their counterparts in the directness, the assurance characterizing their respective treatment of technique. In the former, Maurice, naïveté is particularly evident in the childish attitudes and proportions of the figures and in their featureless faces and in the faces equally expressionless despite “markings” indicating—as in children’s drawings—where nose, eyes, mouth would occur without lending to these features any specific identity. In Charles’ work, specifically that of the type represented by “Central Park” (Plate 17), the figures, very much alike in their silhouetted puppet shape, cast no shadows and are shown in awkward, unstudied positions; faces and hairdos are likewise repeated from figure to figure, and no attention is given to scale; trees in the distance are made up of large, individually marked-off leaves or flowers, and row upon row of buildings are patterned with row upon row of windows and topped each with a flag blowing in the wind. These two artists, naïve as they were in some aspects of their work, were nonetheless knowing men of the world; they travelled, visited museums and, no less than did Cézanne and van Gogh, studied the work of other artists and allowed themselves to be influenced by a number of varied traditions—mainly, Daumier’s, Manet’s, the Impressionists’, Cézanne’s and the Mosaicists’ in the case of Maurice; and the Oriental, Manet’s and the Impressionists’ in the case of Charles.

In contrast to these, we might mention Picasso’s “Portrait of a Baby” (Plate 86), in which what might easily be taken for a sophisticated artist’s pretending to naïveté comes from the fact that a naïve child is being portrayed, that a naïve-looking child was the subject. And, again admittedly, it may not be an easy task to differentiate the naïveté which the subject of a painting may have from the naïveté expressed by the artist as he responds to that subject in the terms of his medium. Here the picture is a portrait having as its subject a child whose naïveté is stressed by the manner

of presenting the illustrative facts: there is the shy-of-the-world look on the face; there are the tightly aligned fingers and the hesitant hand; there are the largeness of the head in proportion to the body and the demure character of the pose. All these impart to the *subject* a naïveté, but the *picture* as an expressive entity is anything but naïve. Indeed, the very drawing, the modeling of the factors that say naïve child indicate by their characteristics that Picasso was thoroughly sophisticated in his observations and his portrayal; he studied and knew well what distinguishes the appearance of the naïve baby and knew well, too, how to use the painter's plastic means to make them convey that naïveté. The modeling, for instance, and the depiction of the baby's psychological nature are subtly and fully expressive, and the technical execution is that of a pro: it is plastic, neither literal nor superficial and far from stereotyped, and the relationships among all of the means are established with finesse, sensitivity and sophisticated knowledge. What may be said, therefore, is that Picasso enters into the spirit, so to speak, of his subject, not unlike, say, Delacroix in "Killing the Dragon" (Plate 13) does in the dramatic activity he, Delacroix, imparts to the drawing, composition and brush work. But Picasso is also full master of his idea and means and does not allow the character of the subject to dictate their treatment. Thus, for example, highlights fall where they would fall naturally, perspective is taken into account and elements selected from Daumier's, Manet's, Cézanne's, van Gogh's and Rousseau's drawing and modeling are creatively adapted to answer to Picasso's own desired effects. The hands, for instance, are the hands of a child, the hands, that is, of the picture's naïve subject; they are not, for that, naïvely drawn, for their execution discloses Picasso's knowledge of the distinctive appearance and expressiveness of a young child's hands.

A glance at Rousseau's "Woman with Basket of Eggs" (Plate 87) may help to clinch our point about Picasso's "Portrait of a Baby": the subject as such, in the Rousseau, is not naïve, yet the artist's conception of it and presentation—the drawing, the modeling, the relative proportions—are. In other words—returning to the Picasso—an artist

need not himself be naïve in order to express naïveté, as he need not himself be graceful or athletic to express in his work the gracefulness of a ballerina or the power of an athlete, nor, we might add, is Gauguin a “primitive,” *i.e.*, culturally undeveloped, painter, although many of his subjects are selected from the “primitive,” culturally undeveloped, people and scenery of Tahiti.

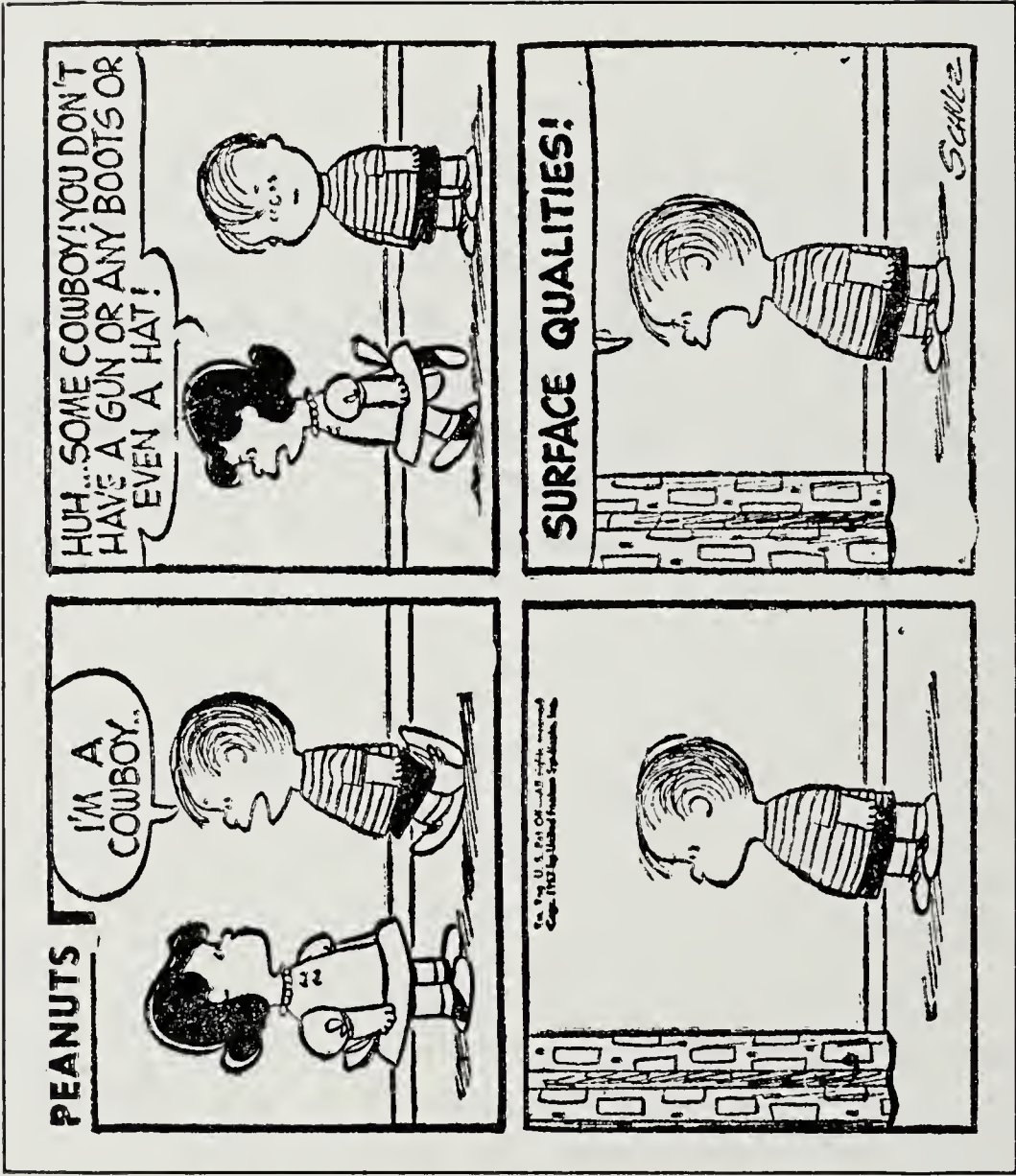
Naïveté, then, not to be confused with such other human traits as ignorance, stupidity, ineptitude and inaptitude—all with negative outcome—is intense conviction, faith, a viewpoint artlessly, ingenuously believed in, blindly accepted, blindly pursued, with no concern other than its own dictates, and potentially productive and imbued with the positive, intrinsic appeal* of its honesty, straightforwardness and unavoidable individuality. And are we not all, each one in his way, each one in his moments, naïve in some manner and up to some point? Of course we are, for there will inevitably be times in our lives, stages in our endeavors and accomplishments when, like the worm in the radish, we, too, shall blindly believe that the radish, *our* radish, is the whole world.†

* Dr. Barnes used to say of Zborowski, a well-known Polish art dealer and poet living in Paris in the 'twenties, that he was the most charming of would-be crooks, for he was so disarmingly and appealingly naïve in his business transactions that it was always a particular and keen delight to let him believe that he had had the best of you.

† It could well be that our attempt in this essay to pinpoint some of the salient features that make for naïveté reflect our own naïveté in the matter. Should it do so, however, would it not, by that very token, also help to confirm the accuracy of our assertion that naïveté is, indeed, self-confidence without need for proof or regard for evidence—in short, blind faith?

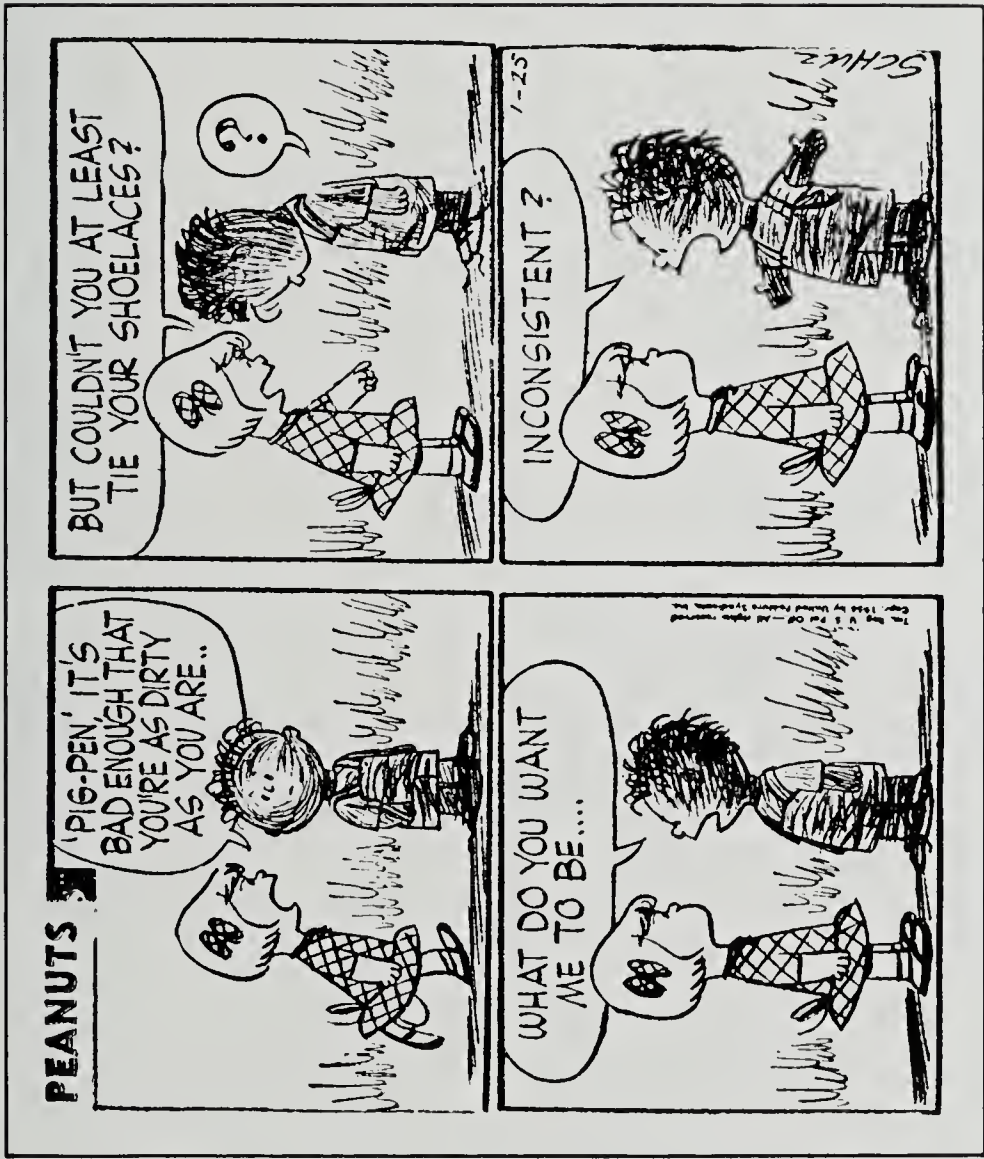
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PLATE 1



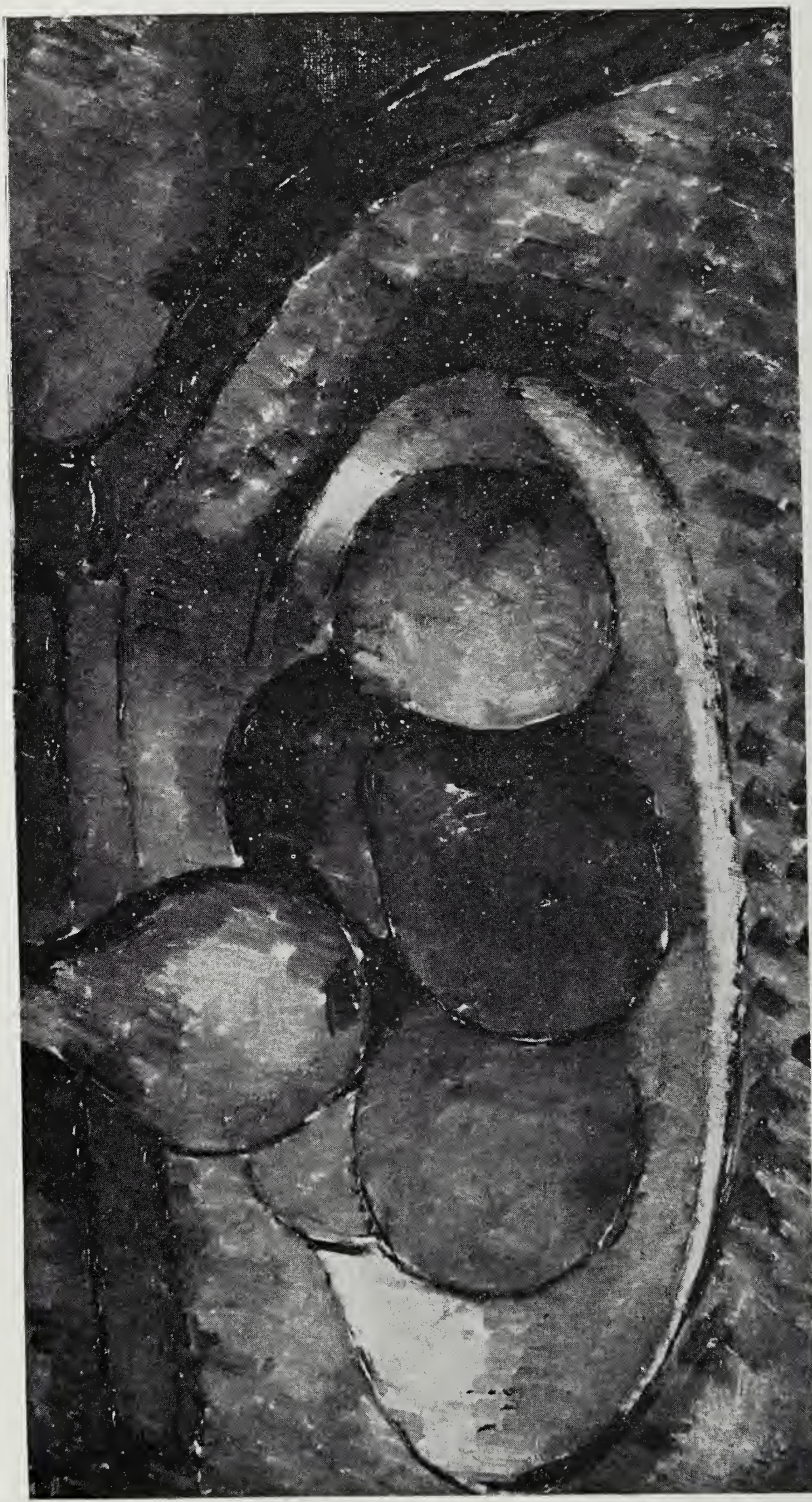
Charles M. Schulz

Peanuts
(The Evening Bulletin, Philadelphia, Pa.—
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Charles M. Schulz

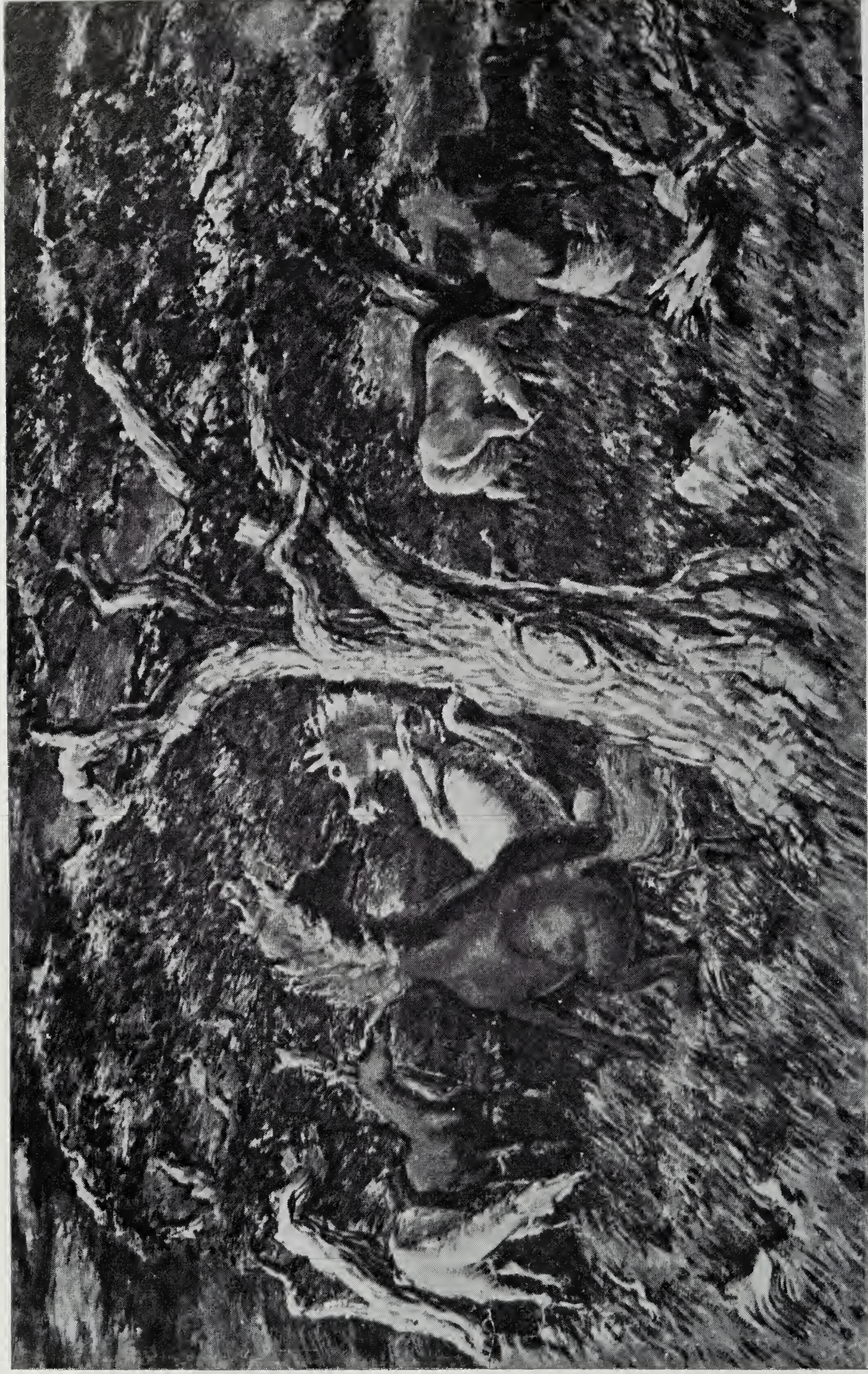
Peanuts
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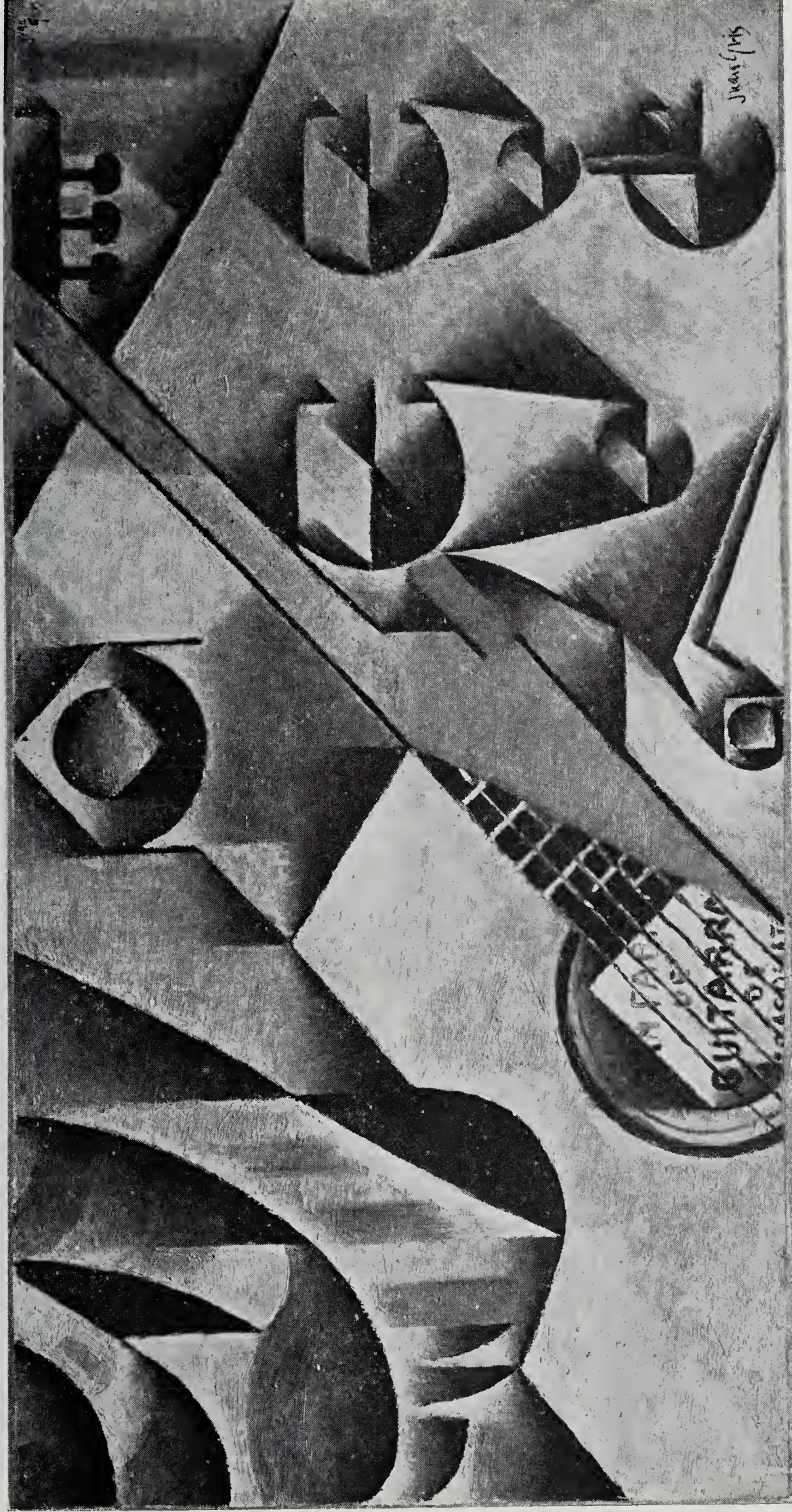




Arthur B. Carles

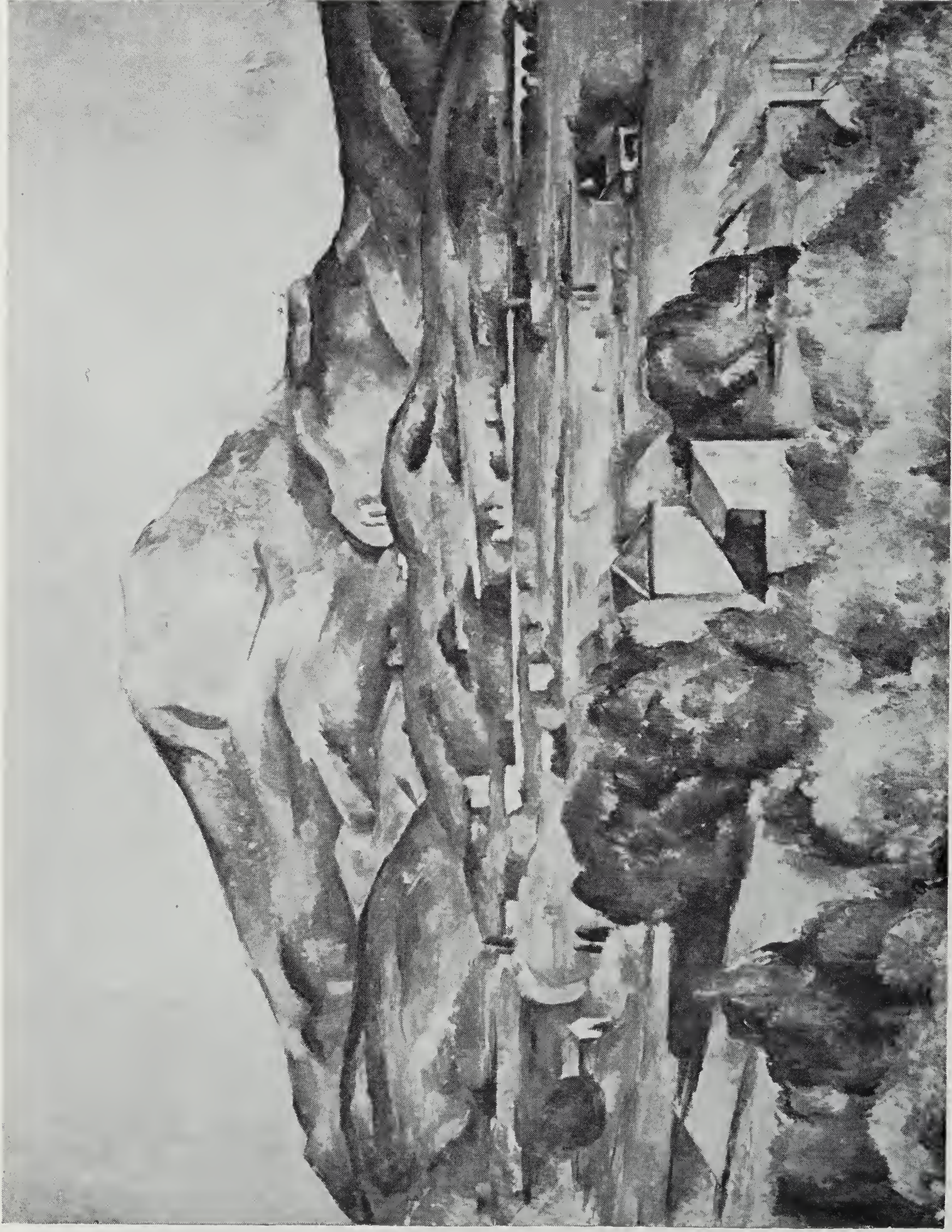
Abstraction
(Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.)—Page 9





Juan Gris

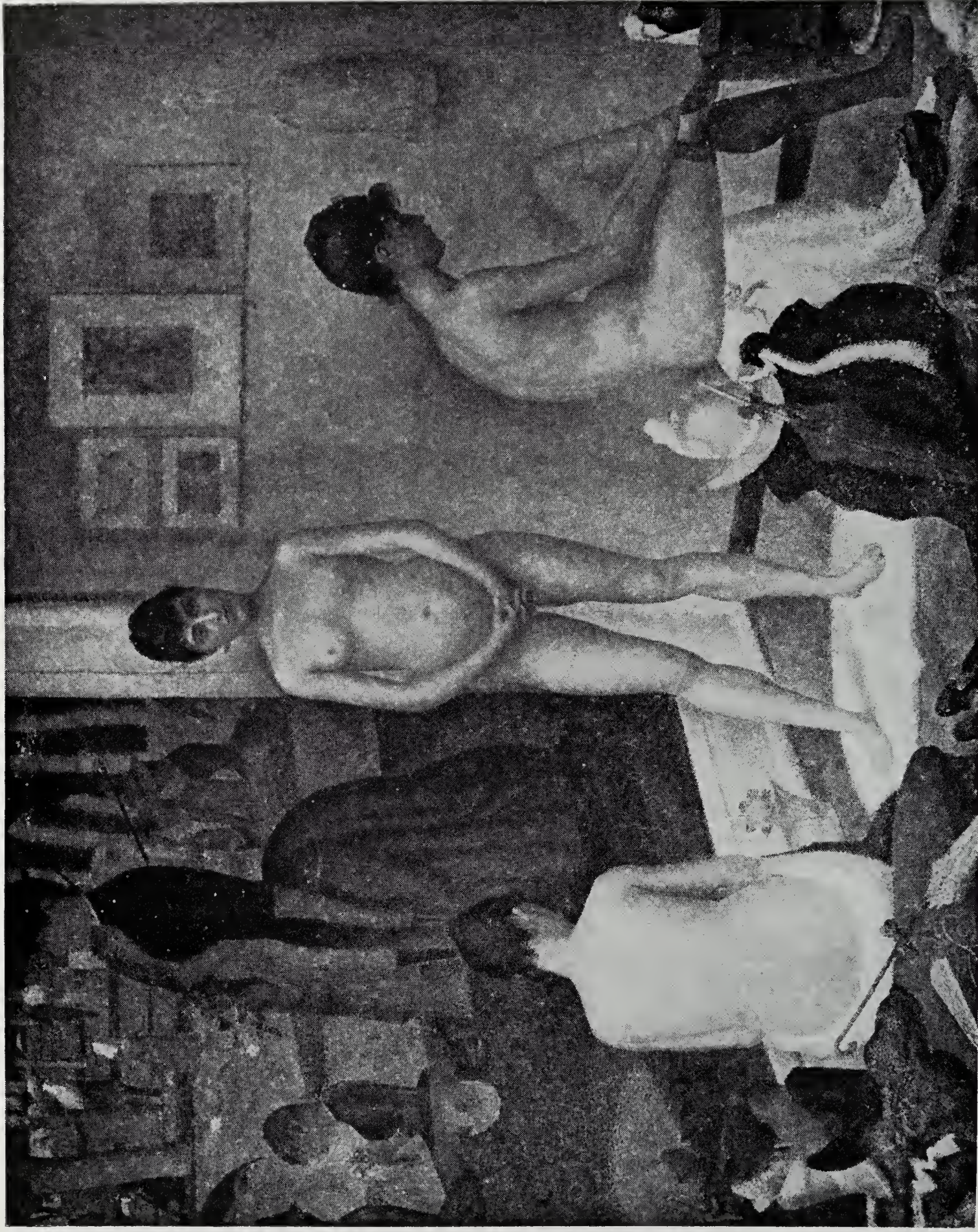
Guitar and Glasses
(Gallery Louise Leiris, Paris—© A.D.A.G.P., Paris, 1976)—Page 10, 10 ftn

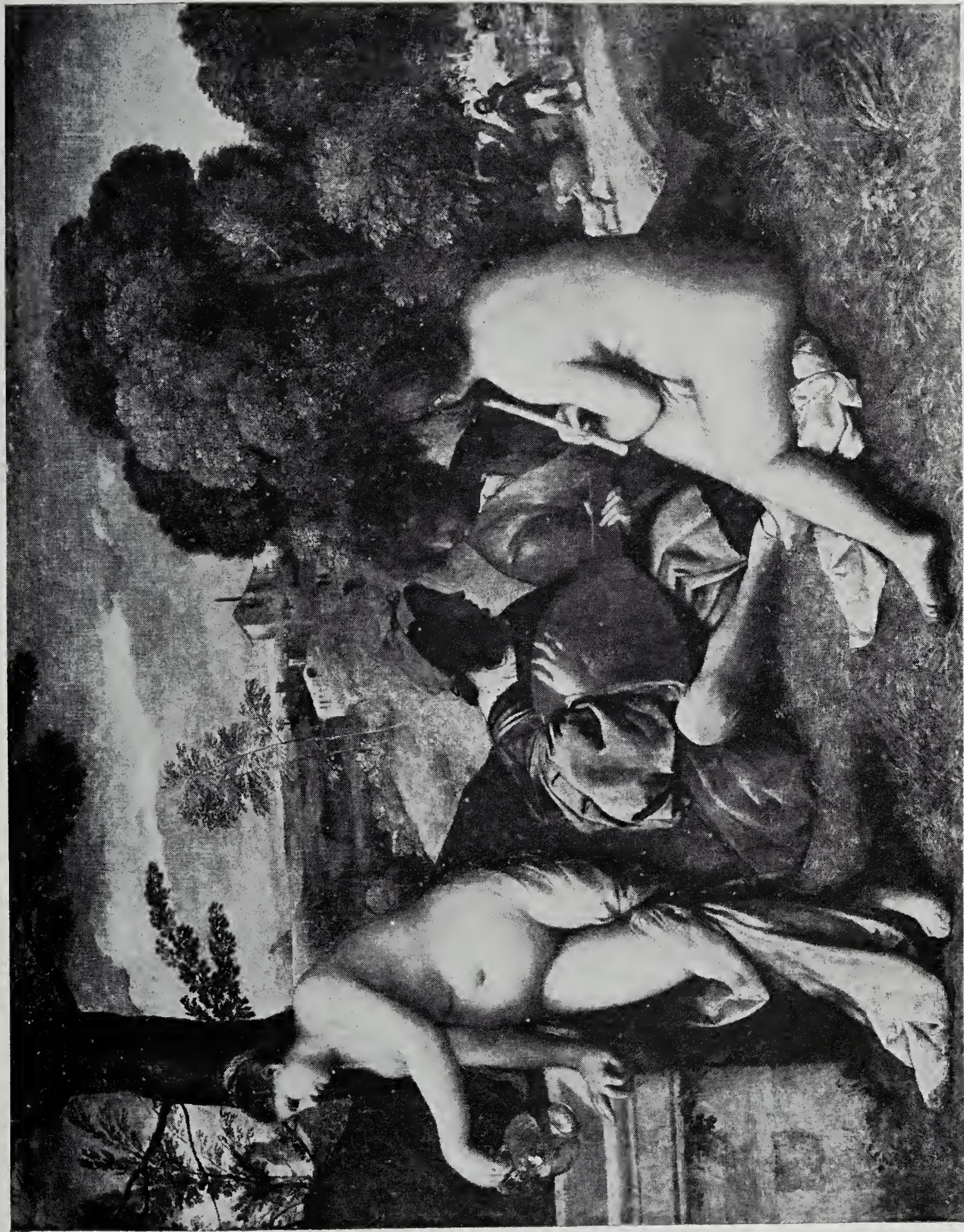




Mont Ste-Victoire, Aix-en-Provence, France

Photograph of Site
(Archi and Lucy Riley)—Pages 16-17





Titian (Formerly attributed to Giorgione or to Giorgione in
collaboration with Titian) *Pastoral*
(Louvre—Photograph, Musées Nationaux, Paris)—Page 19 ftn

PLATE 11



Maurice Prendergast

Figures at the Beach
—Pages 23, 30, 64, 73



John Kane

Children in the Field
—Pages 64, 69, 70





Pippin

Christ and the Woman of Samaria
— eggs: 63, 69

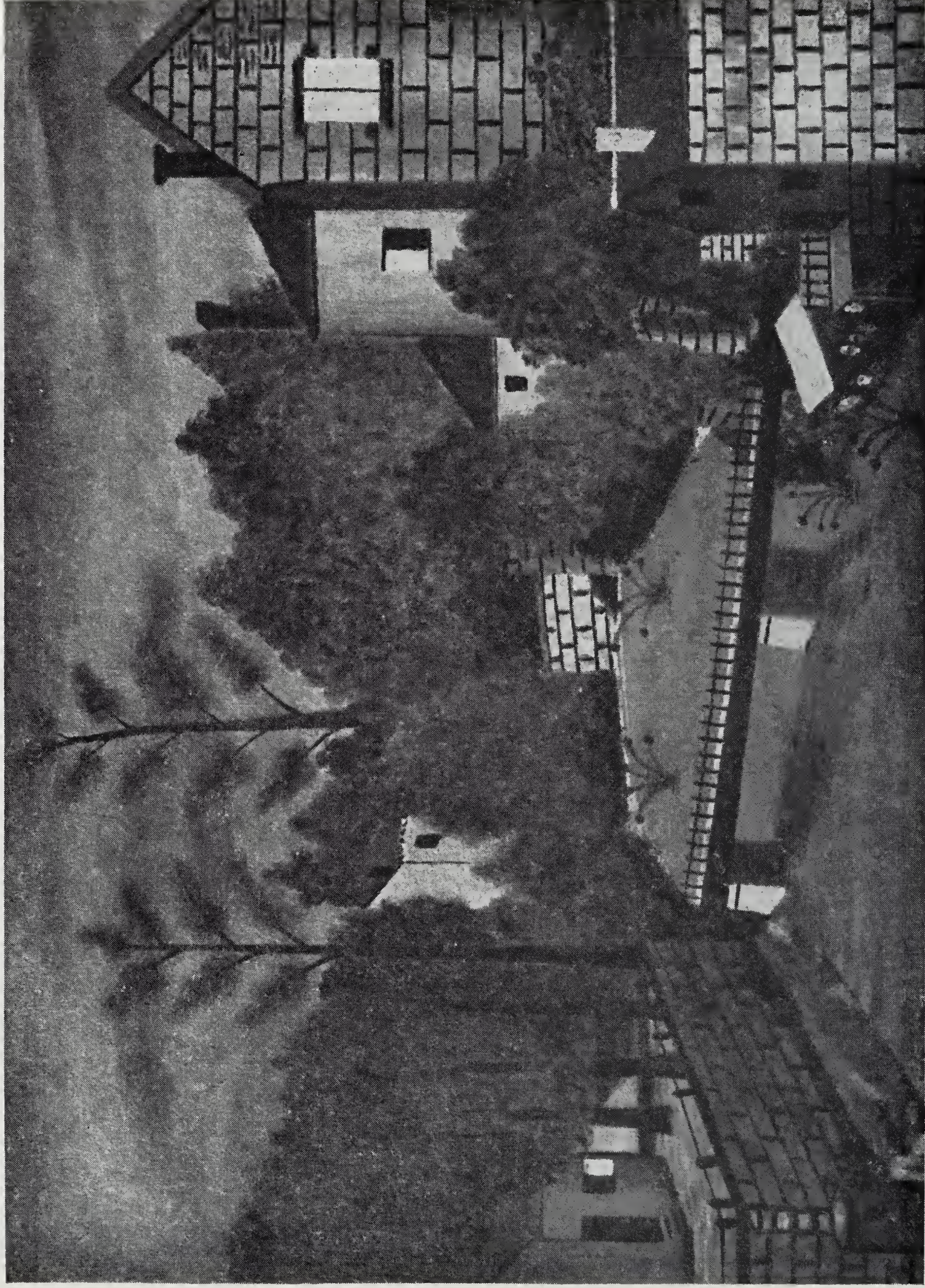


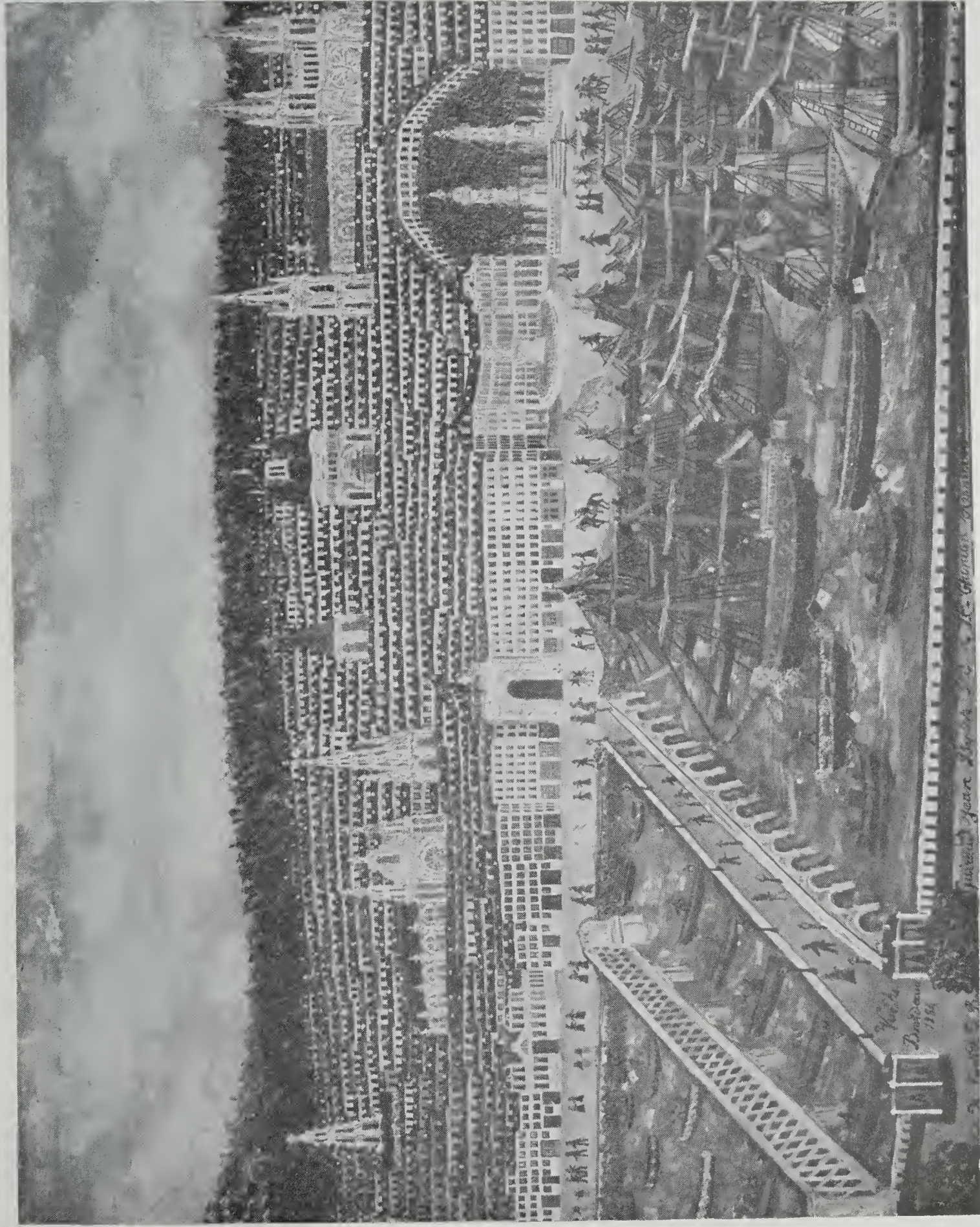






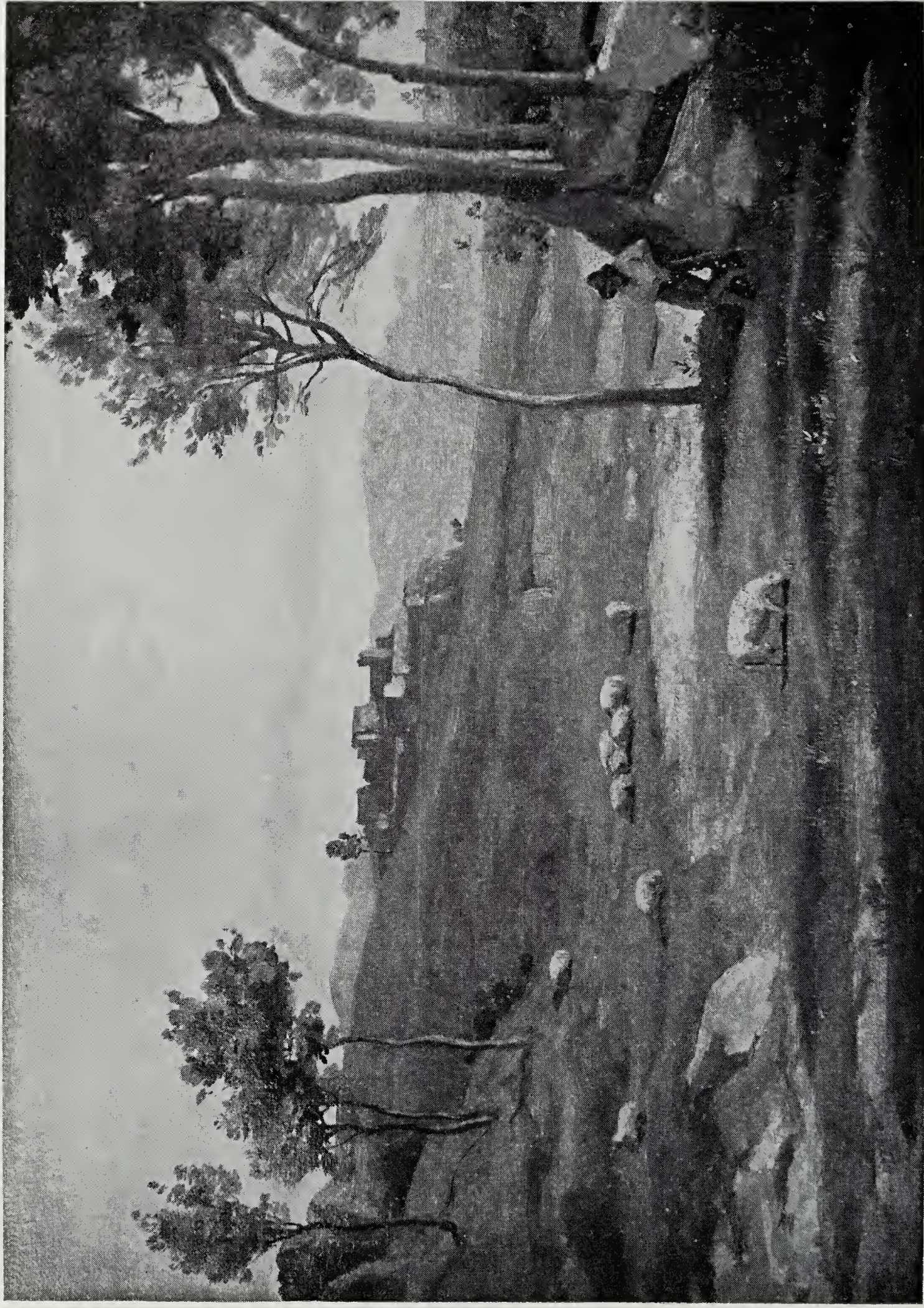
Charles Prendergast

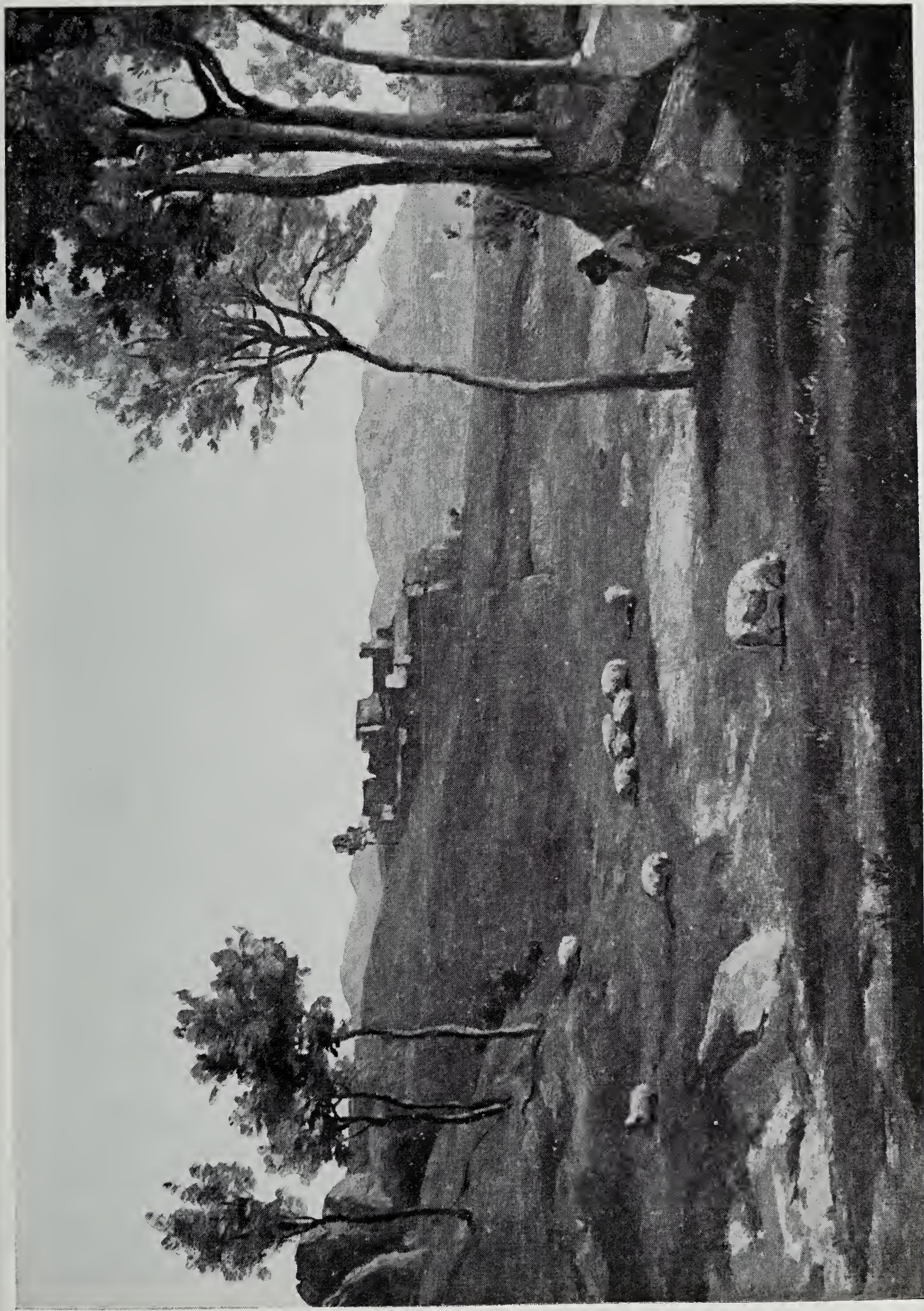




View of Bordeaux—1884
—Pages 69, 70

Jean Baptiste Guiraud

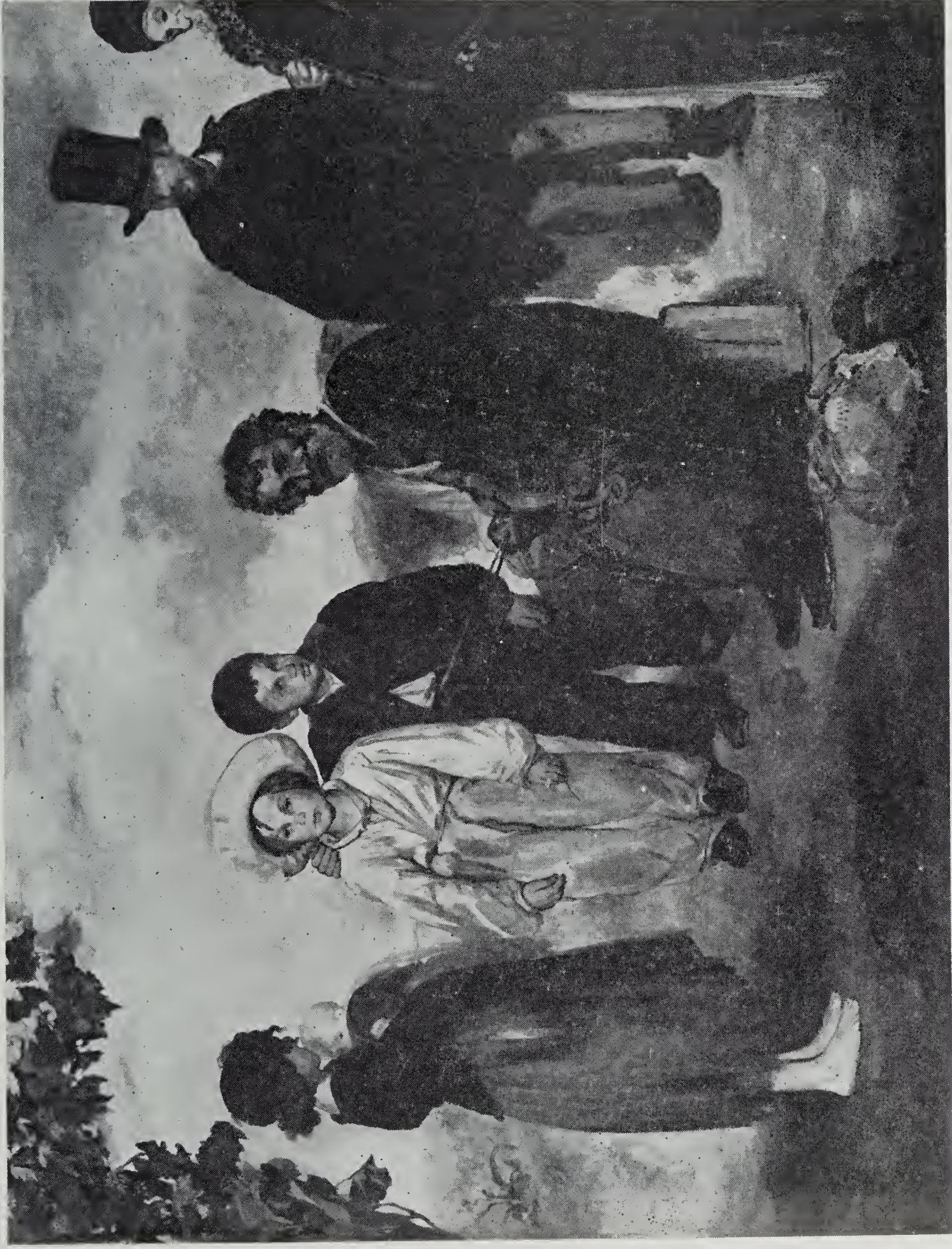




Corot

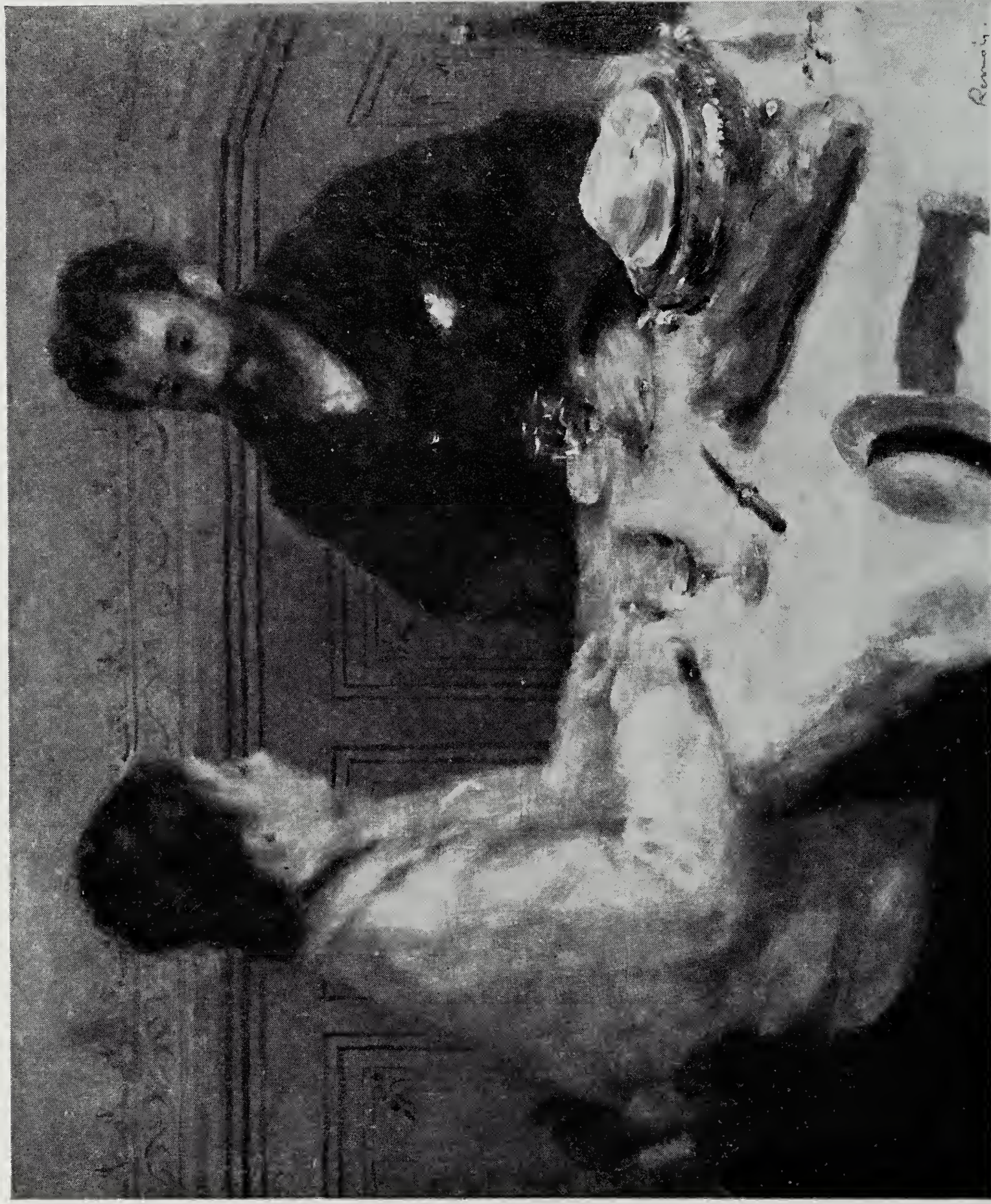
Italian Landscape
(Altered photograph of Plate 21)
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Manet

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The Holy Family
(National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
—Samuel H. Kress Collection)—Page 27 fn



Tintoretto





Klee

Sicilian Landscape
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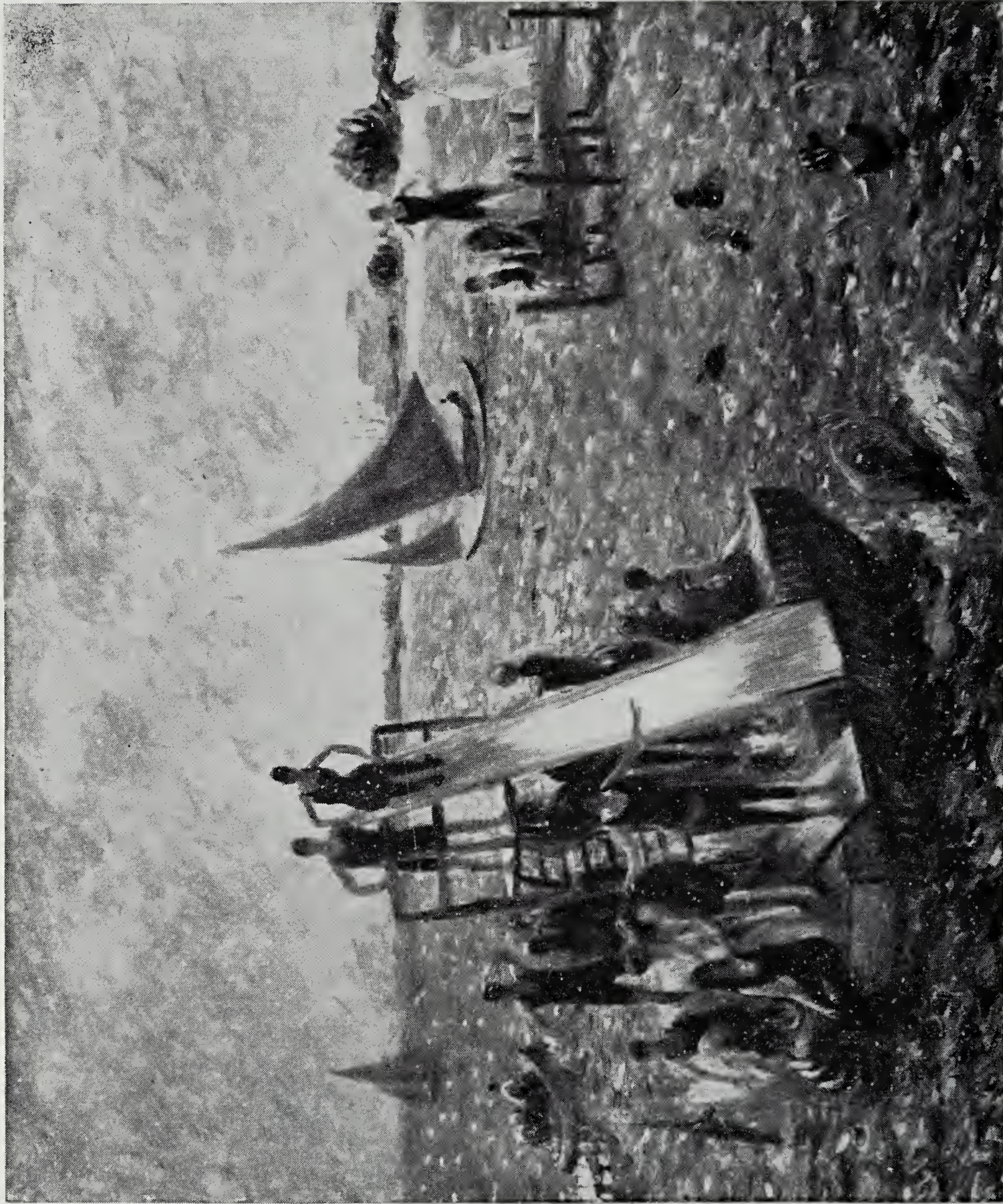


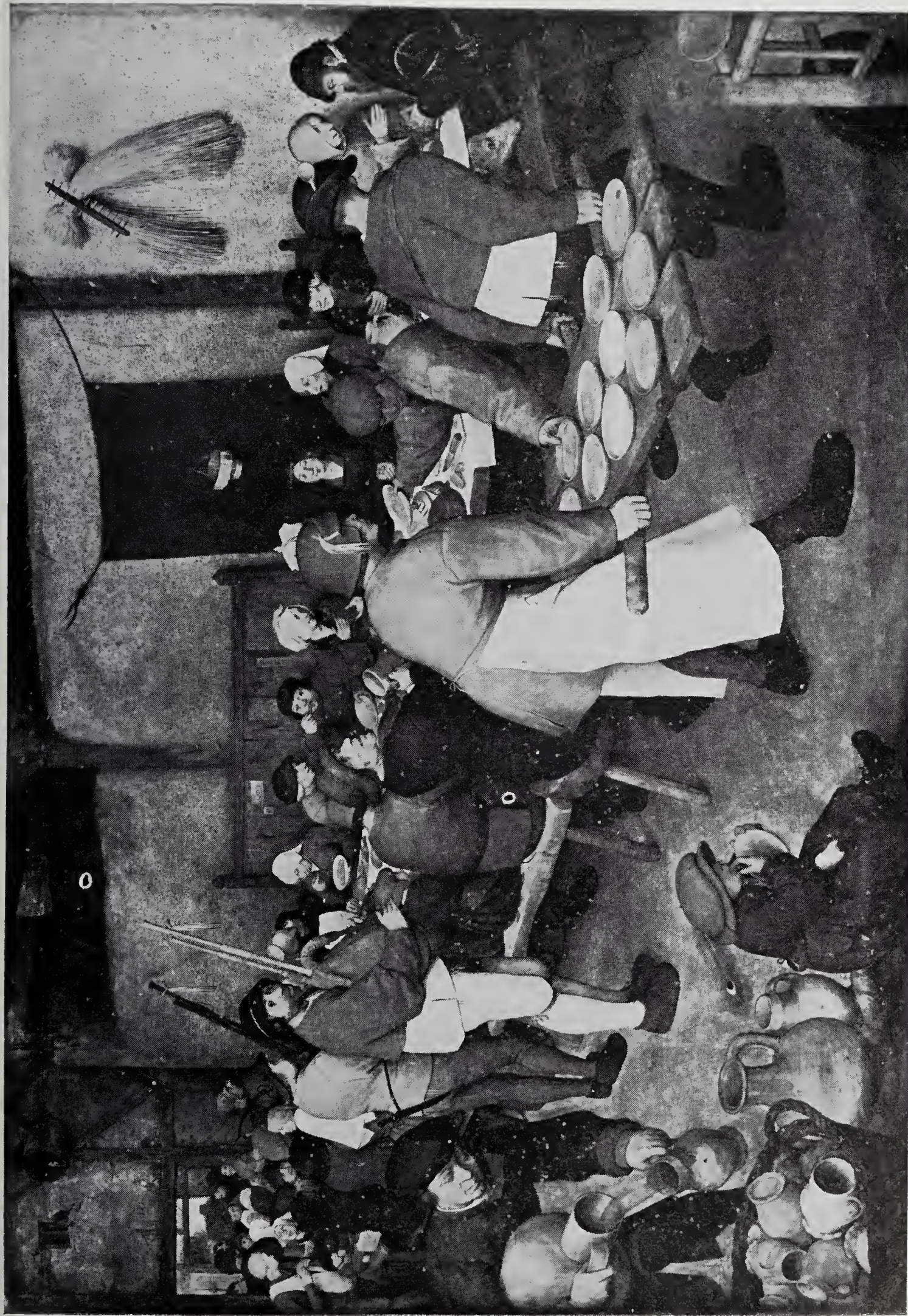
FONTIS NYMPHA SACRI SOMNI
NVM NE RVMPPE QVIESCO .



Cranach the Elder

The Nymph of the Spring
(Courtesy National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
—Gift of Clarence Y. Palitz)—Page 24





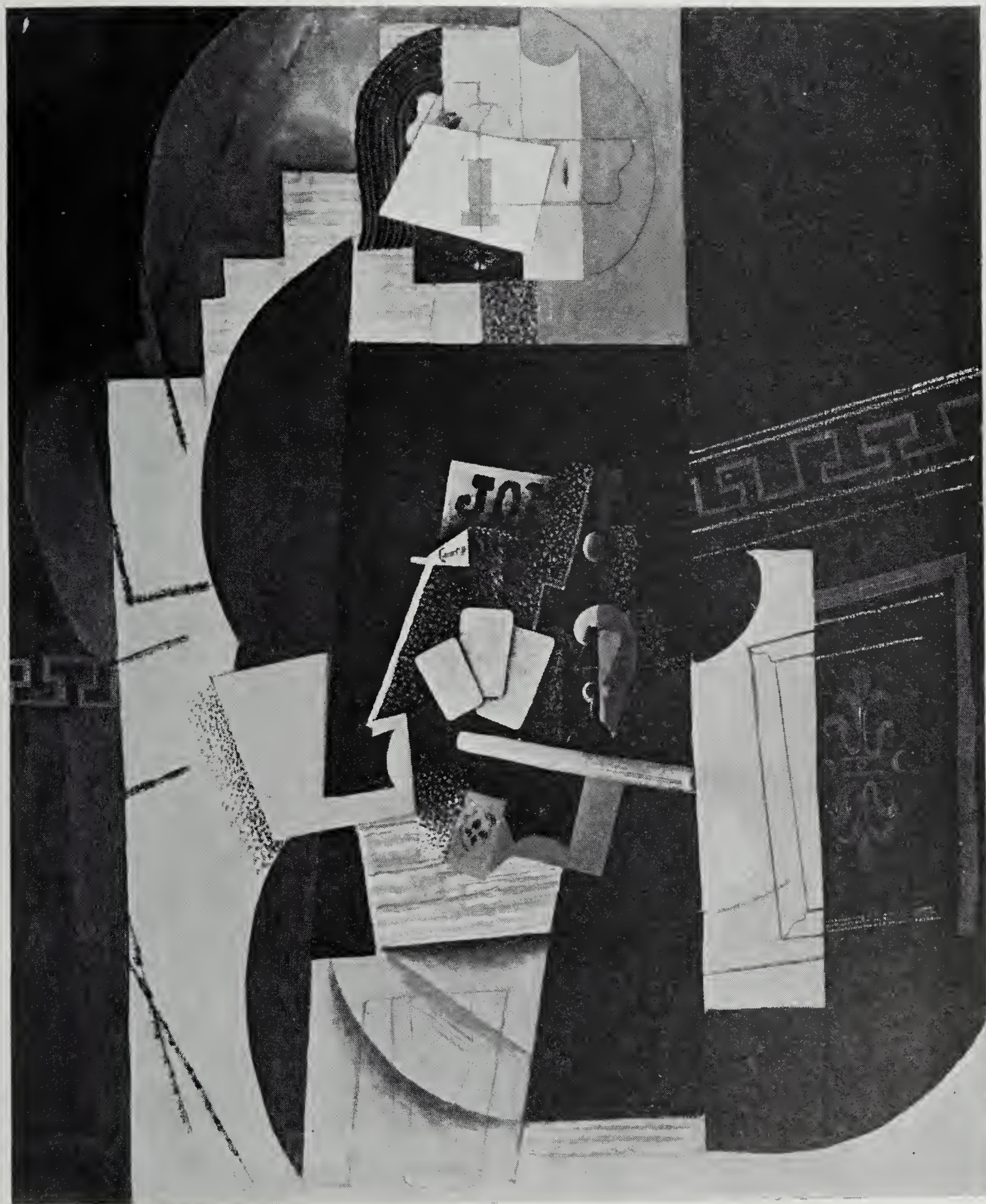
Peter Breughel the Elder

Peasant Wedding
(Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)—Page 61 ftn



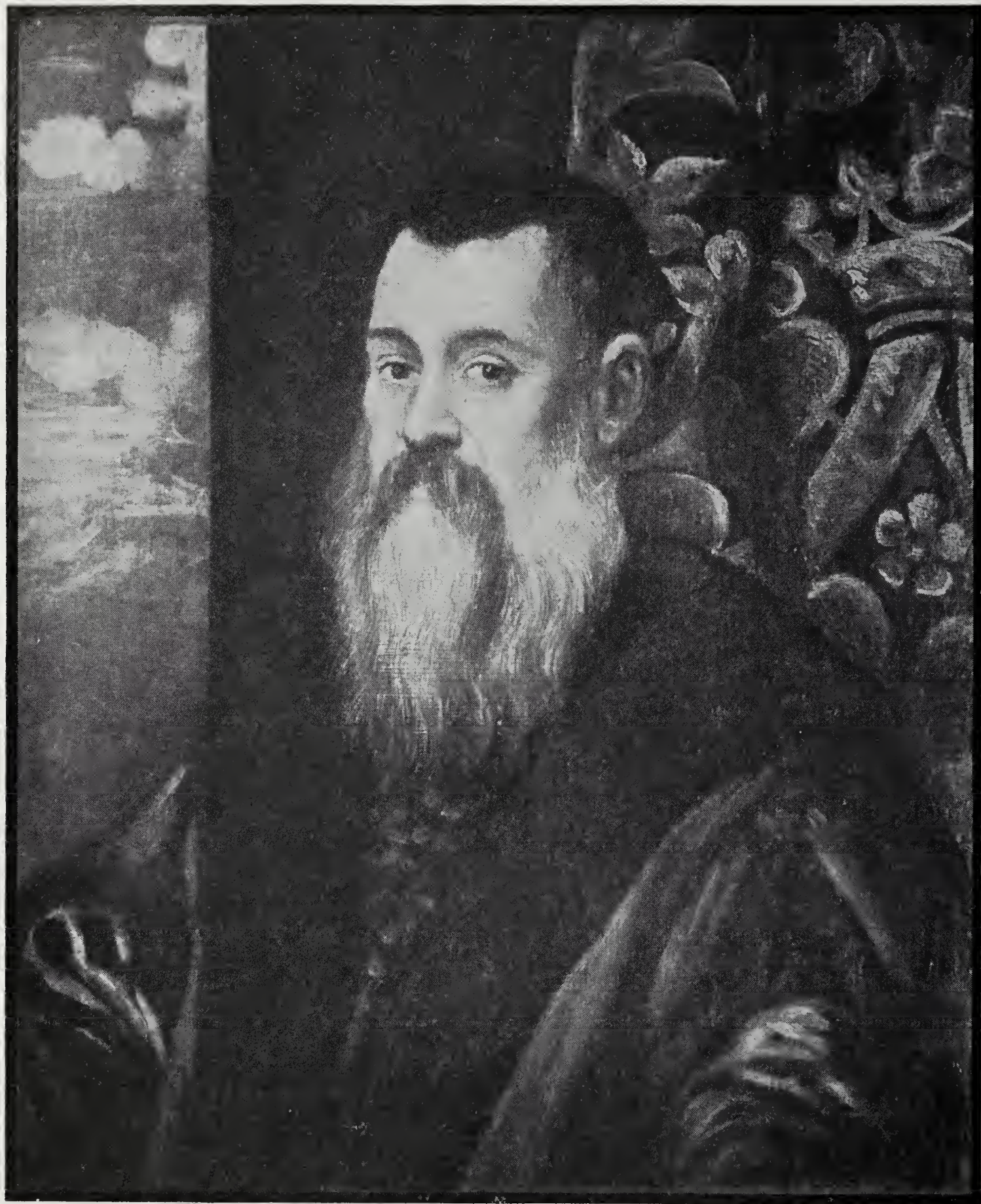
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Fruit and Ginger Jar
—Page 5



Picasso

Card Player
(The Museum of Modern Art, New York
—Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest)—Page 19



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A Venetian Senator
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—Page 13



Masaccio

Adam and Eve

(Church del Carmine—Florence

—Photograph, Scala/Alinari, New York/Florence)

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Renoir

Caryatids
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Jan Arnolfini and Jeanne de Chenany, his Wife
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Trustees,
The National Gallery, London)—Pages 27 ftn, 68 ftn



El Greco

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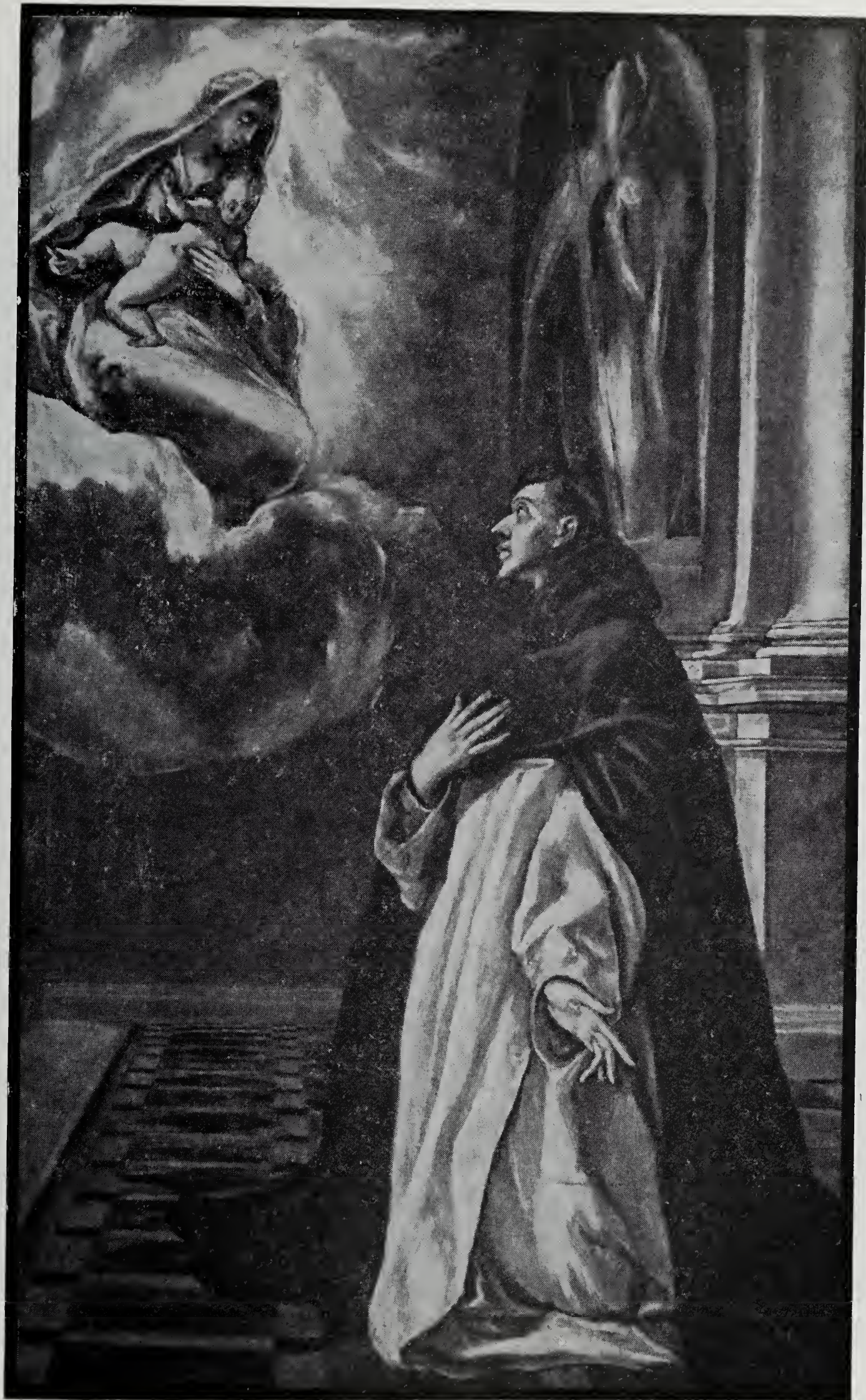
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Hamlet and Horatio
(Albertina Collection, Vienna)—Pages 13,29 ftn



Demuth

Mlle Lulu
(Private Collection)—Page 28 ftn



El Greco

Vision of St. Hyacinth
—Page 7



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Two Prophets
—Page 27 ftn



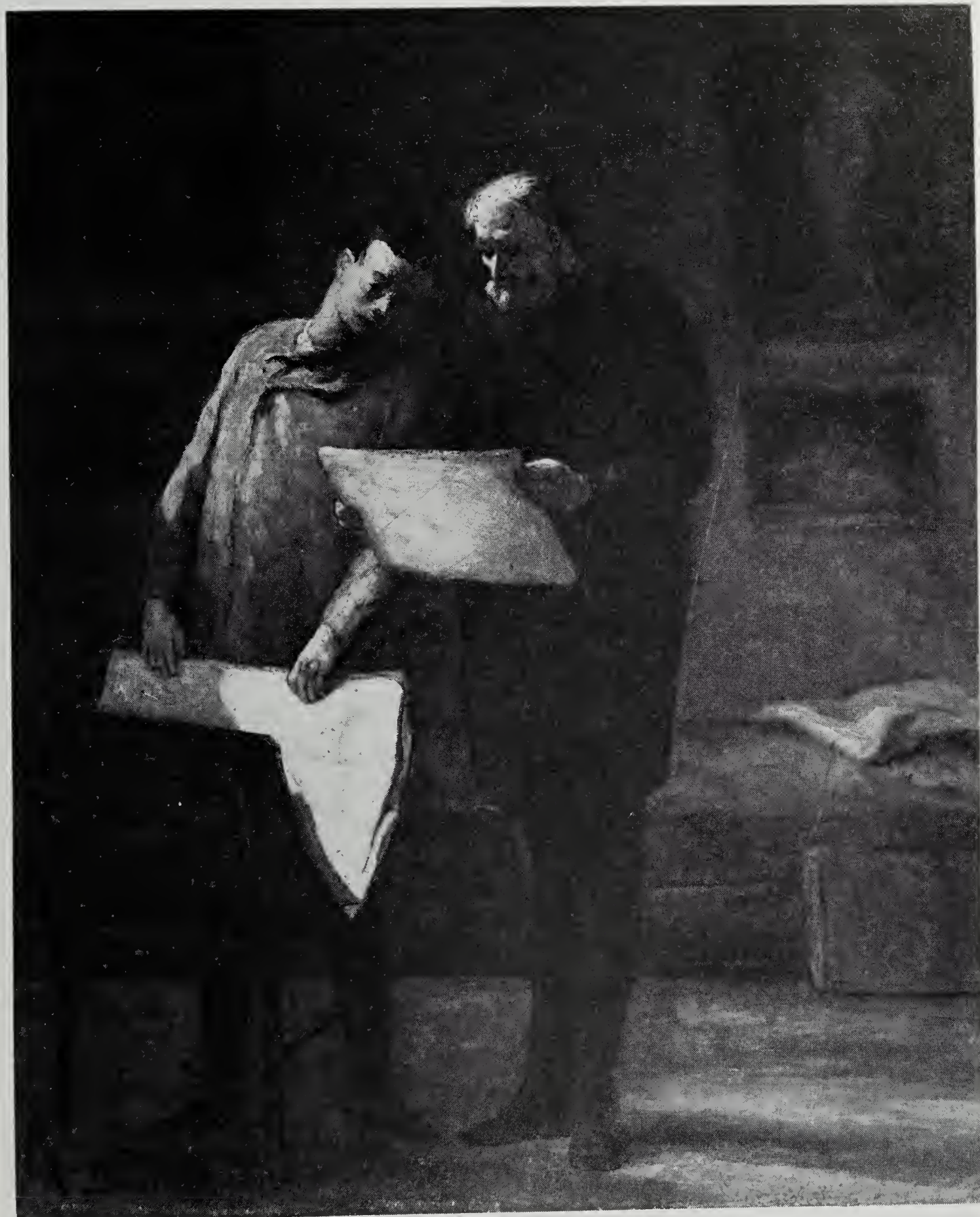
Giorgione

Two Prophets
—Page 27 ftn



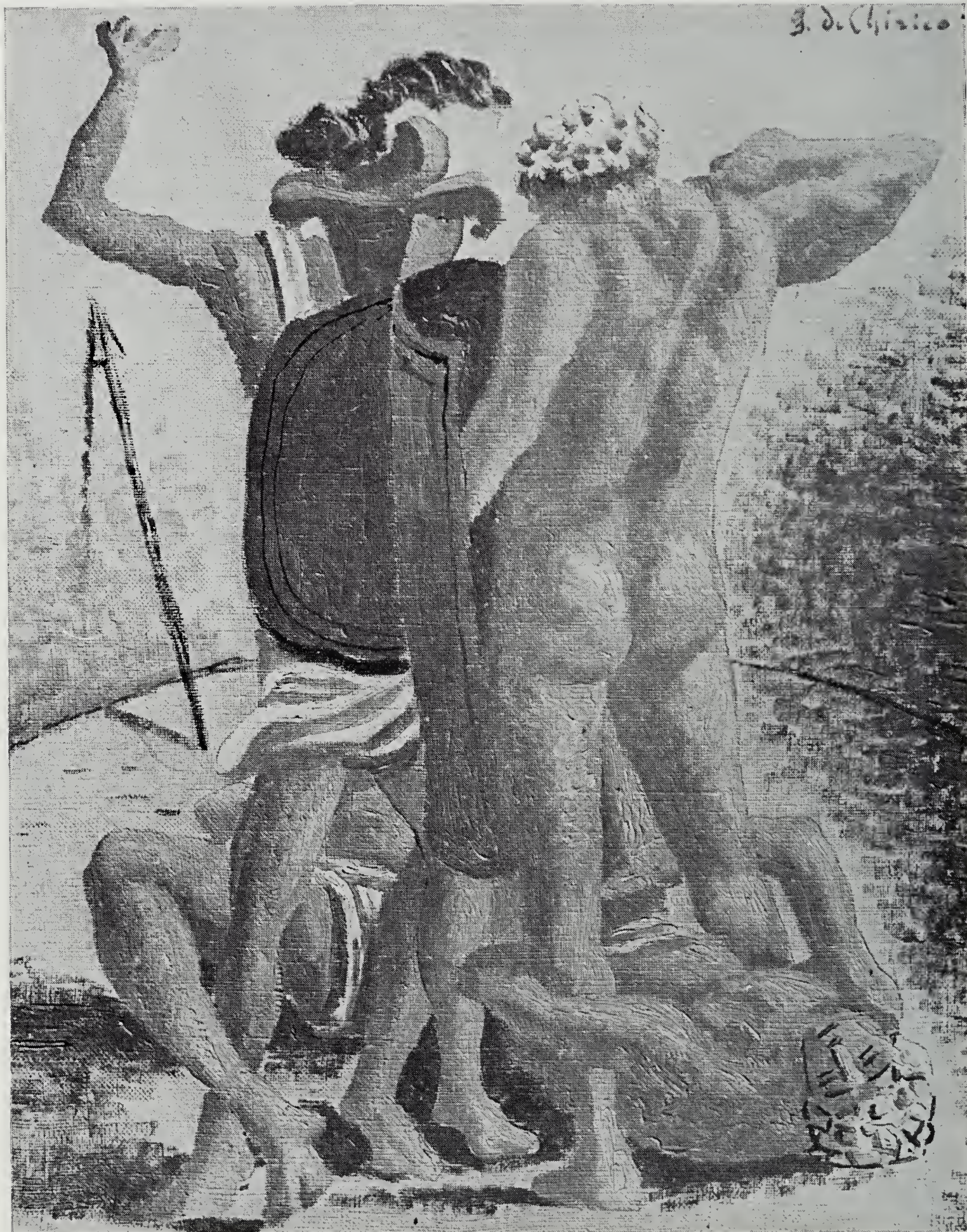
Modigliani

Landscape
—Page 28 ftn



Daumier

Advice to a Young Artist
(National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
—Gift of Duncan Phillips)—Page 27 ftn



De Chirico

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Pascin

Venus and Cupid
—Page 29 ftn



Henri Rousseau

The Wedding (Past and Present)
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Picasso



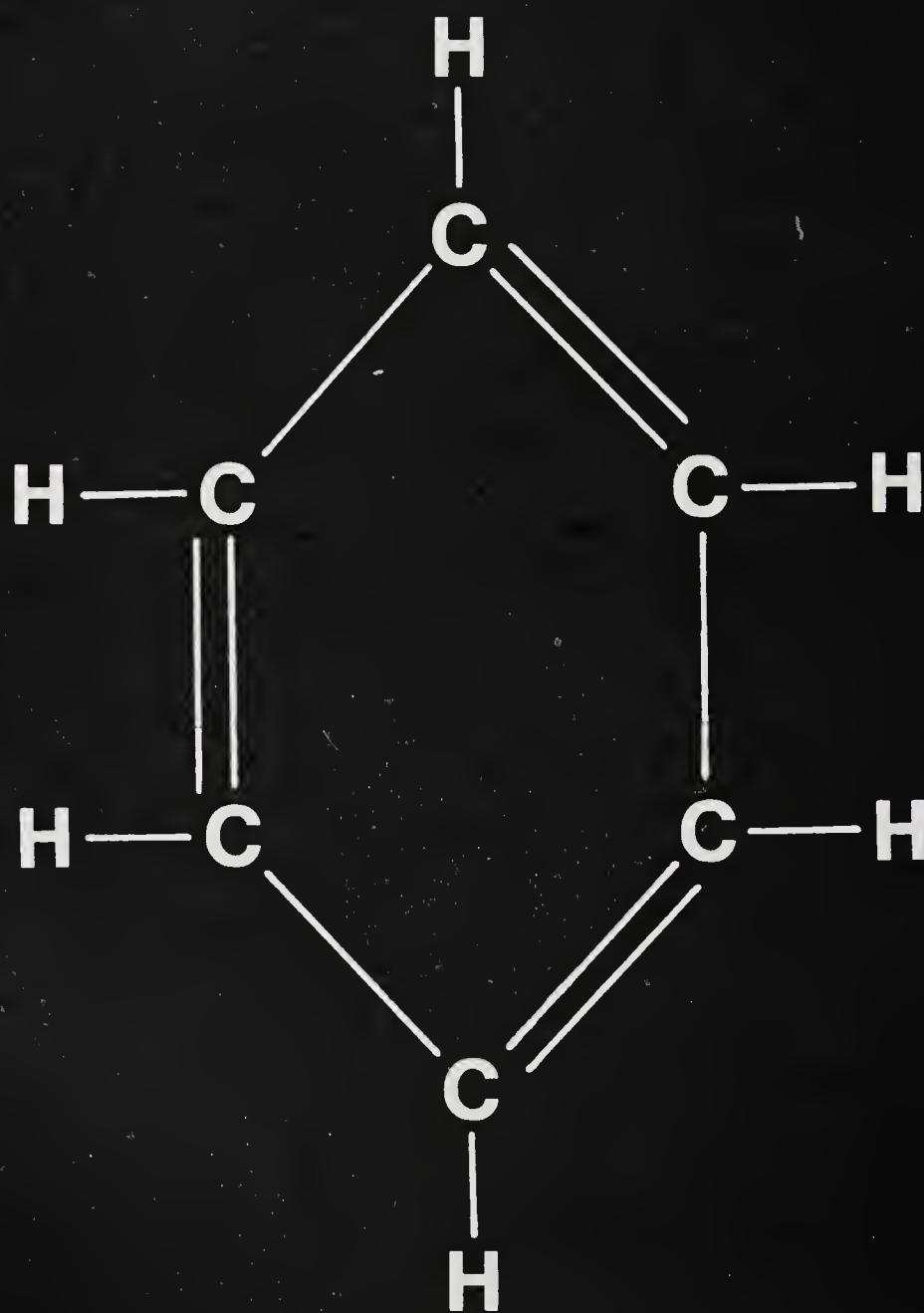
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Two Nudes
—Page 28 ftn

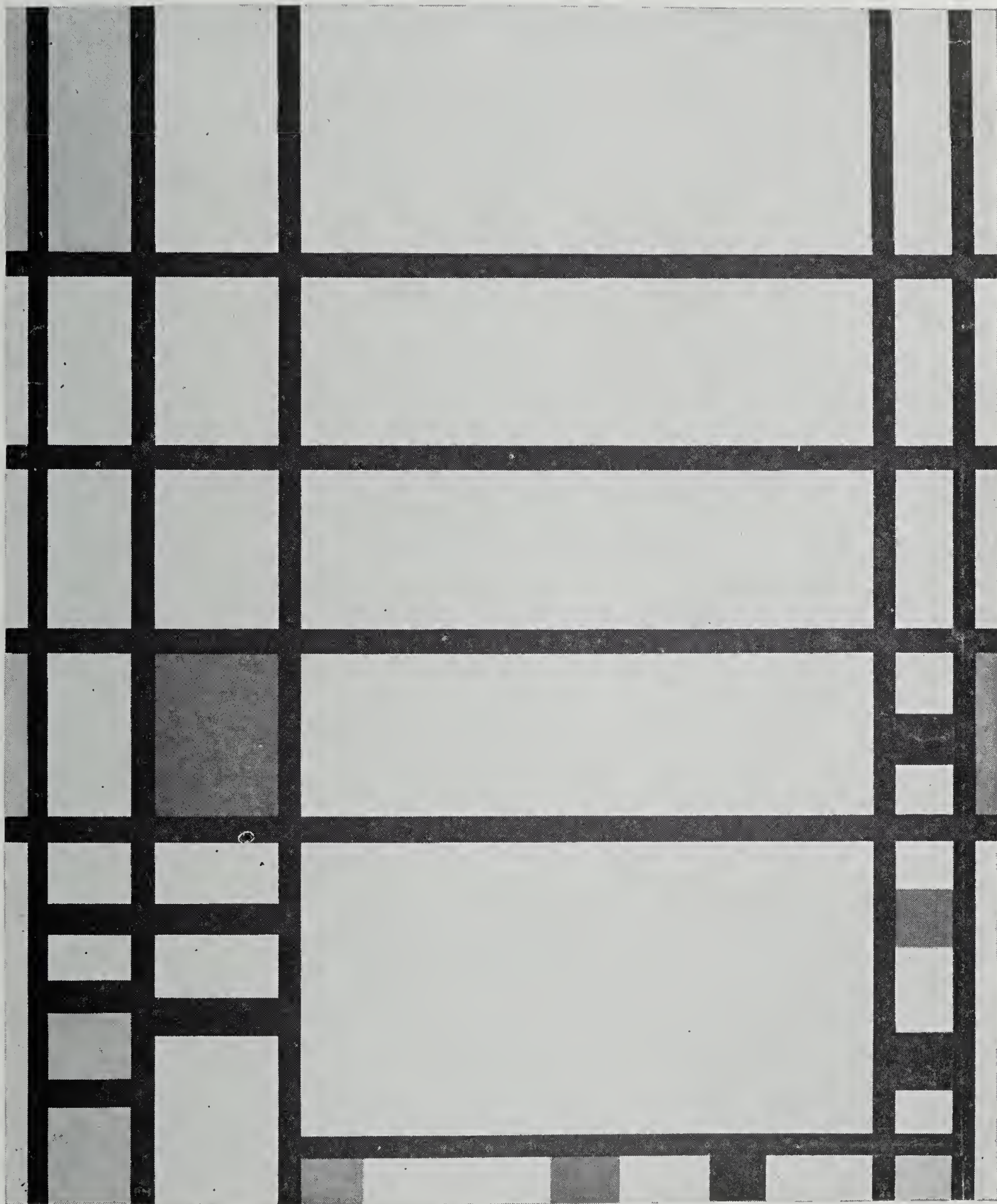


Pennsylvania "Dutch"

Two Young Women
(Private Collection)—Page 61 ftn



A molecule of benzene, showing the arrangement of its atoms of carbon and hydrogen, an arrangement called the "benzene ring"



Mondrian

Trafalgar Square
(The Museum of Modern Art, New York
—Gift of Mr. and Mrs. William A. M. Burden,
donors retaining life interest)—Page 29 ftn



Van Gogh

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Manet

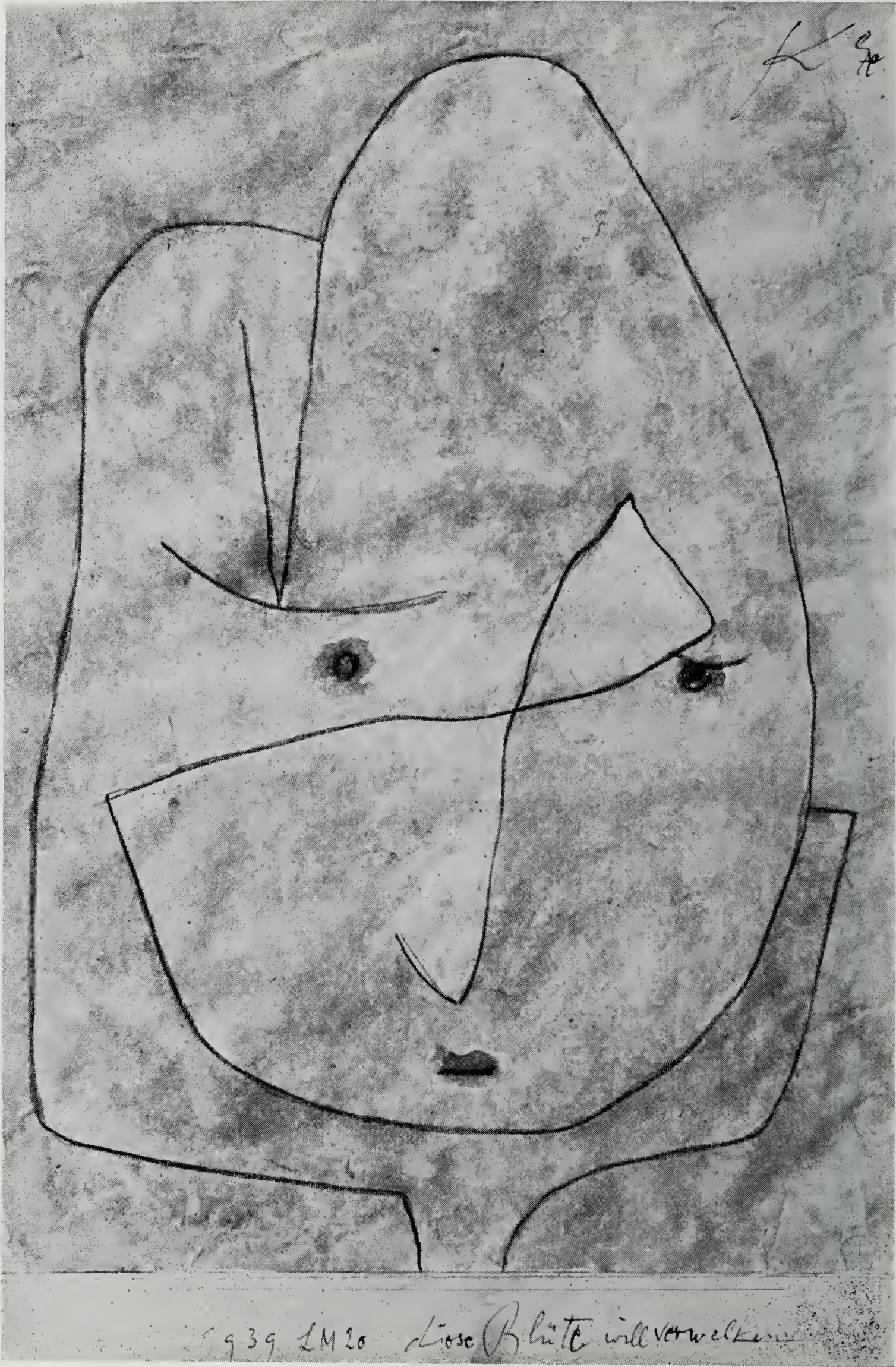
The Wash
—Page 5



Van Gogh



Van Gogh



Klee

This Flower Wishes to Fade
—Pages 60-61, 63



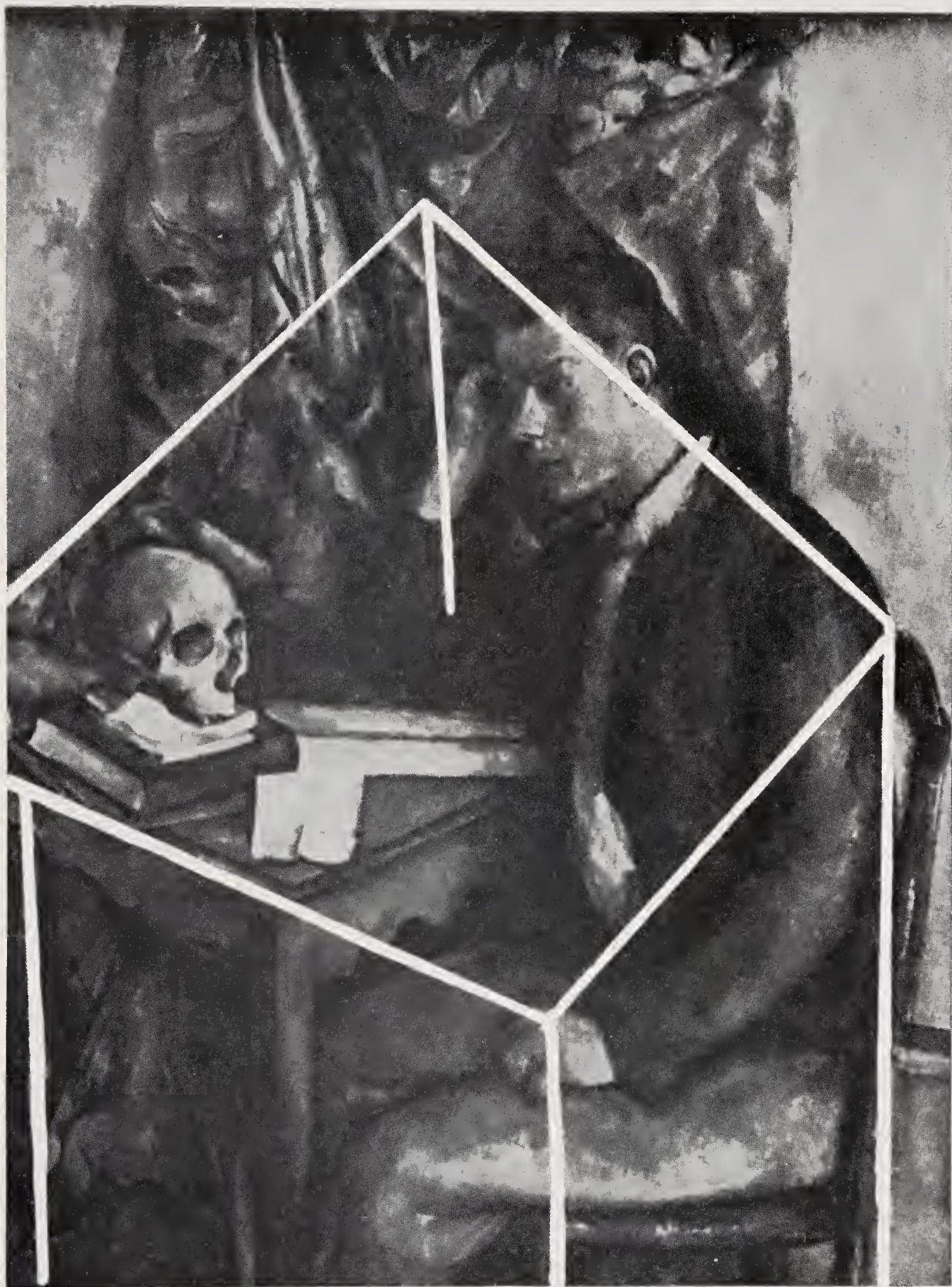
Charles Addams

Magazine Cover
(© 1975 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.)—Page 32 ftn



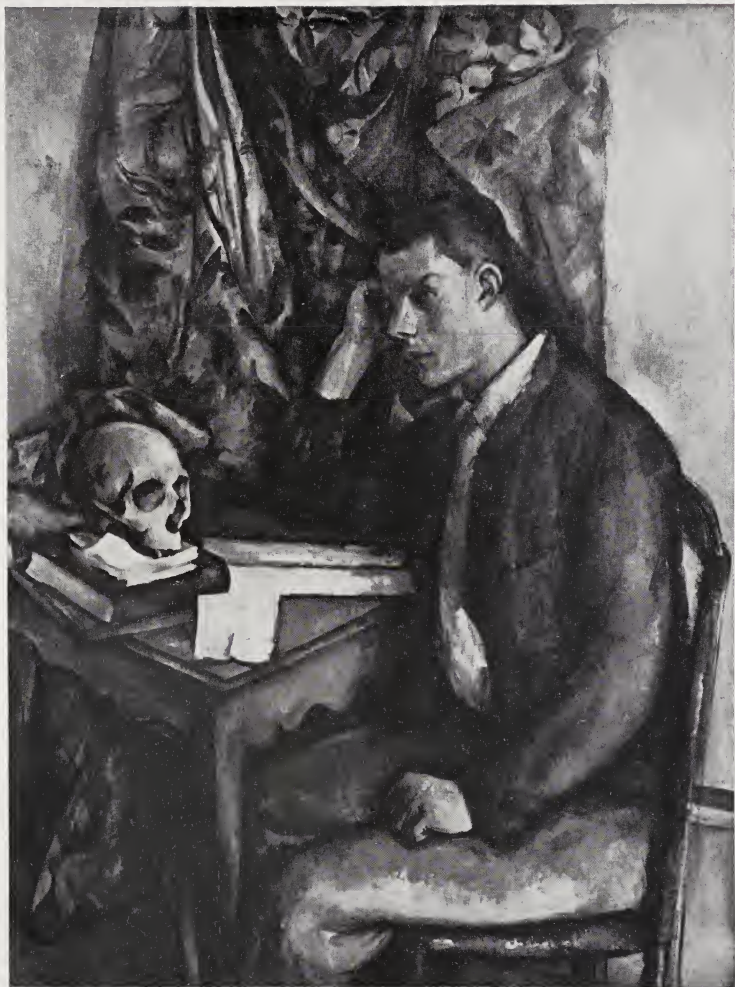
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FOLD-OUT



Cézanne

Cube formation in *Man and Skull* (Fold-out Plate 67)
—Pages 23, 28



Cézanne

Man and Skull
—Pages 3, 4, 11–31, 32



Darragh Homsey (Seven years old)

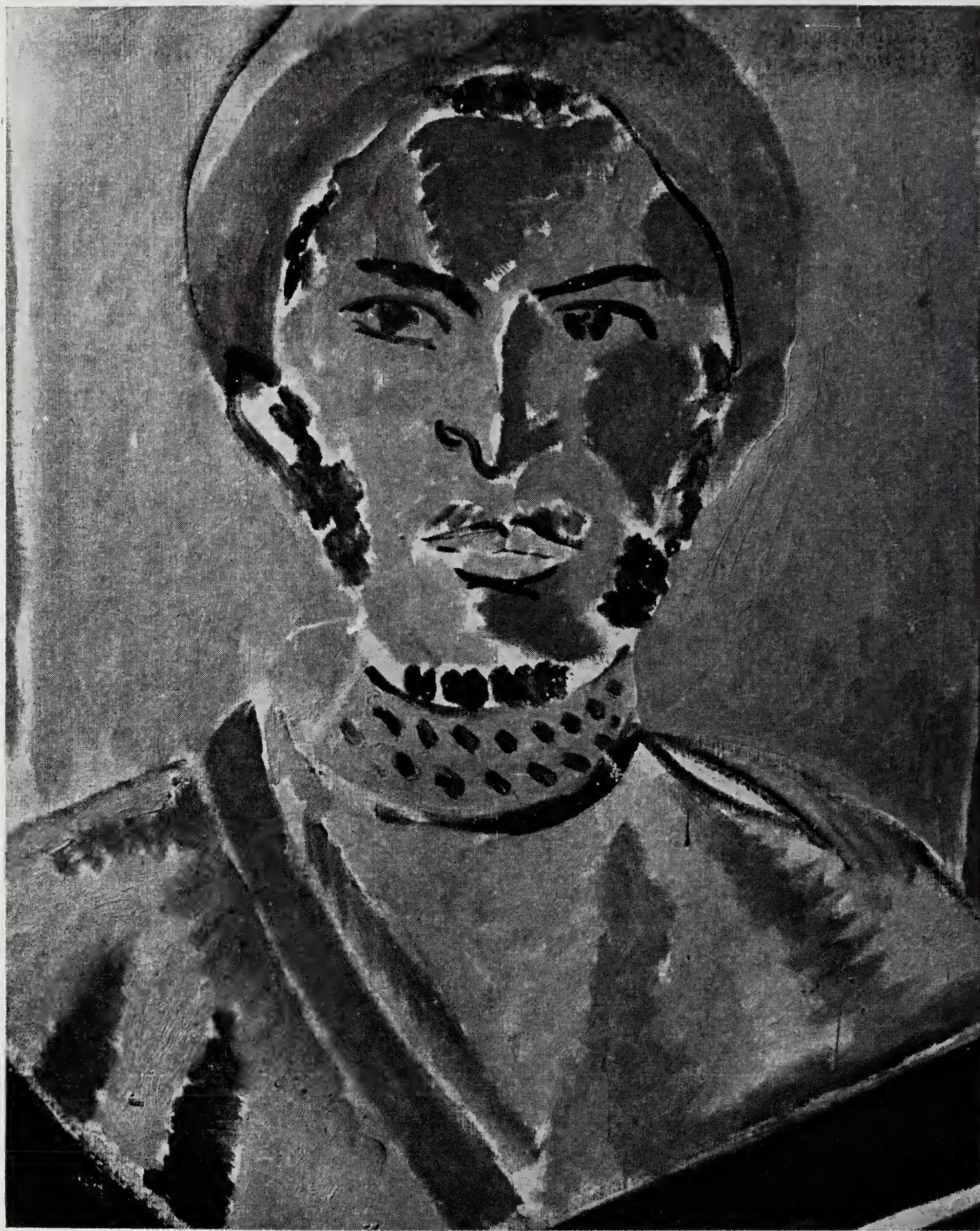
Ballerina
(Private collection)—Pages 60, 61-62, 65



Berta (Seven years old)

Self-Portrait
(With the kind permission of "du" Magazine)—Pages 65-66

PLATE 70



Matisse

Detail from *The Riffian* (Plate 78)
—Pages 61–62



Darragh Homsey (Seven years old)

Detail from *Ballerina* (Plate 68)
(Private Collection)—Pages 61–62



Diana Kesl (Five years old)

Child in Red
(Private Collection)—Pages 60, 62 ftn



Manet

Head of Girl
—Page 62 ftn



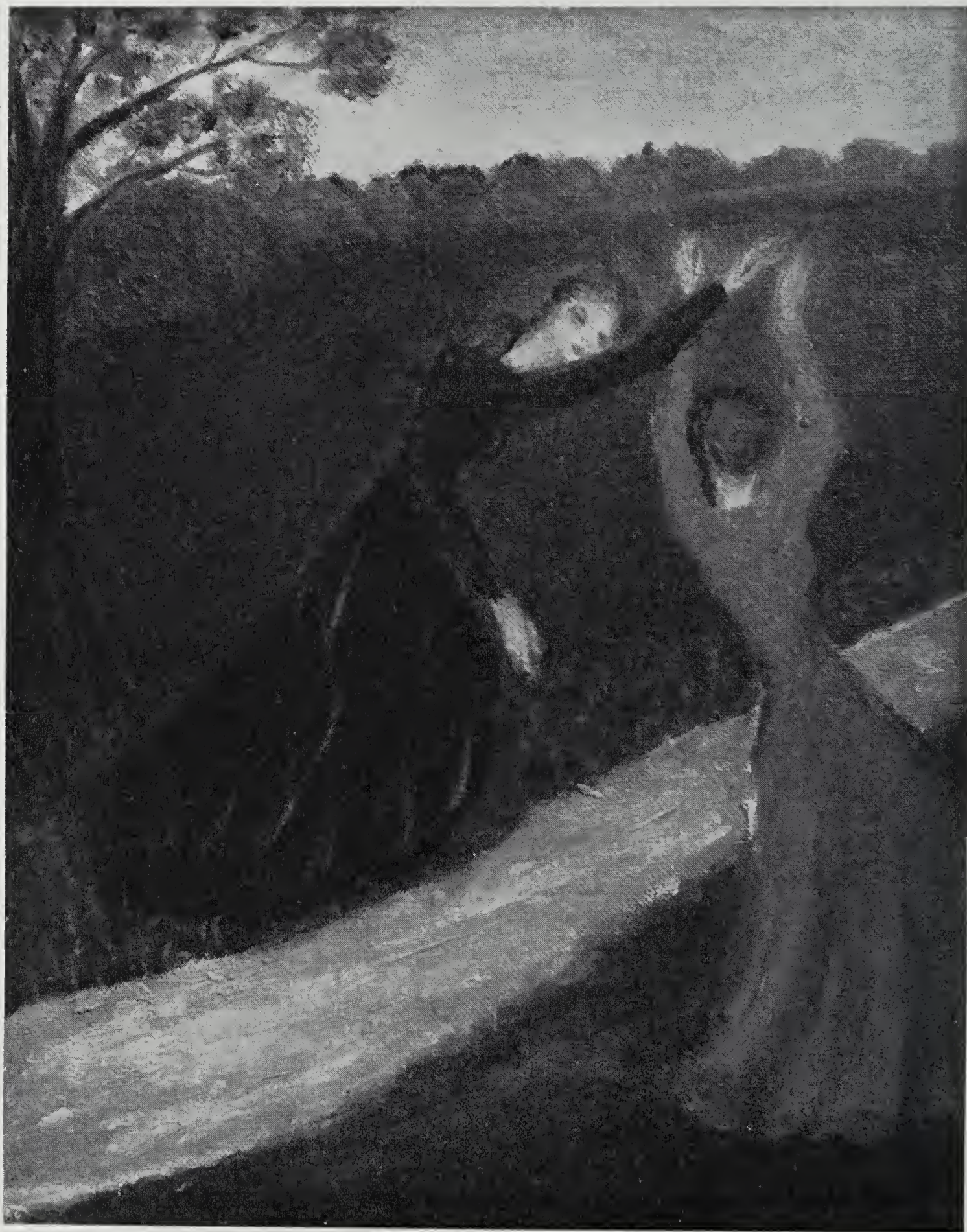
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Violin and Bottle
—Page 70 ftn



Jeremy London (Three and a half years old)

Kinesthetic Painting
(Private Collection)—Page 60 ftn



Tilly Losch

The Creek
—Pages 66, 69



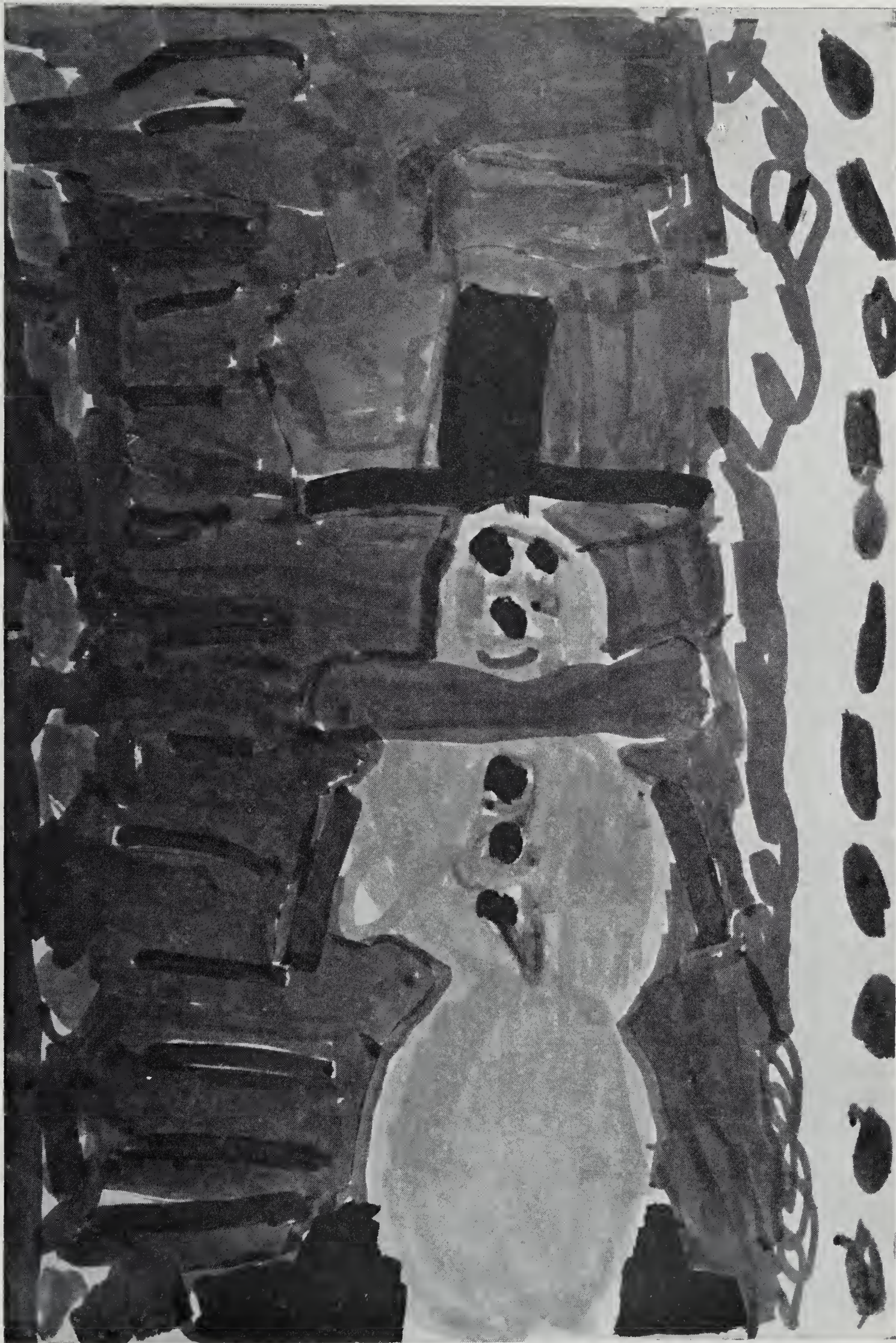
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Suburban Street
(Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
—Bequest of John T. Spaulding)—Page 72



Matisse

The Riffian
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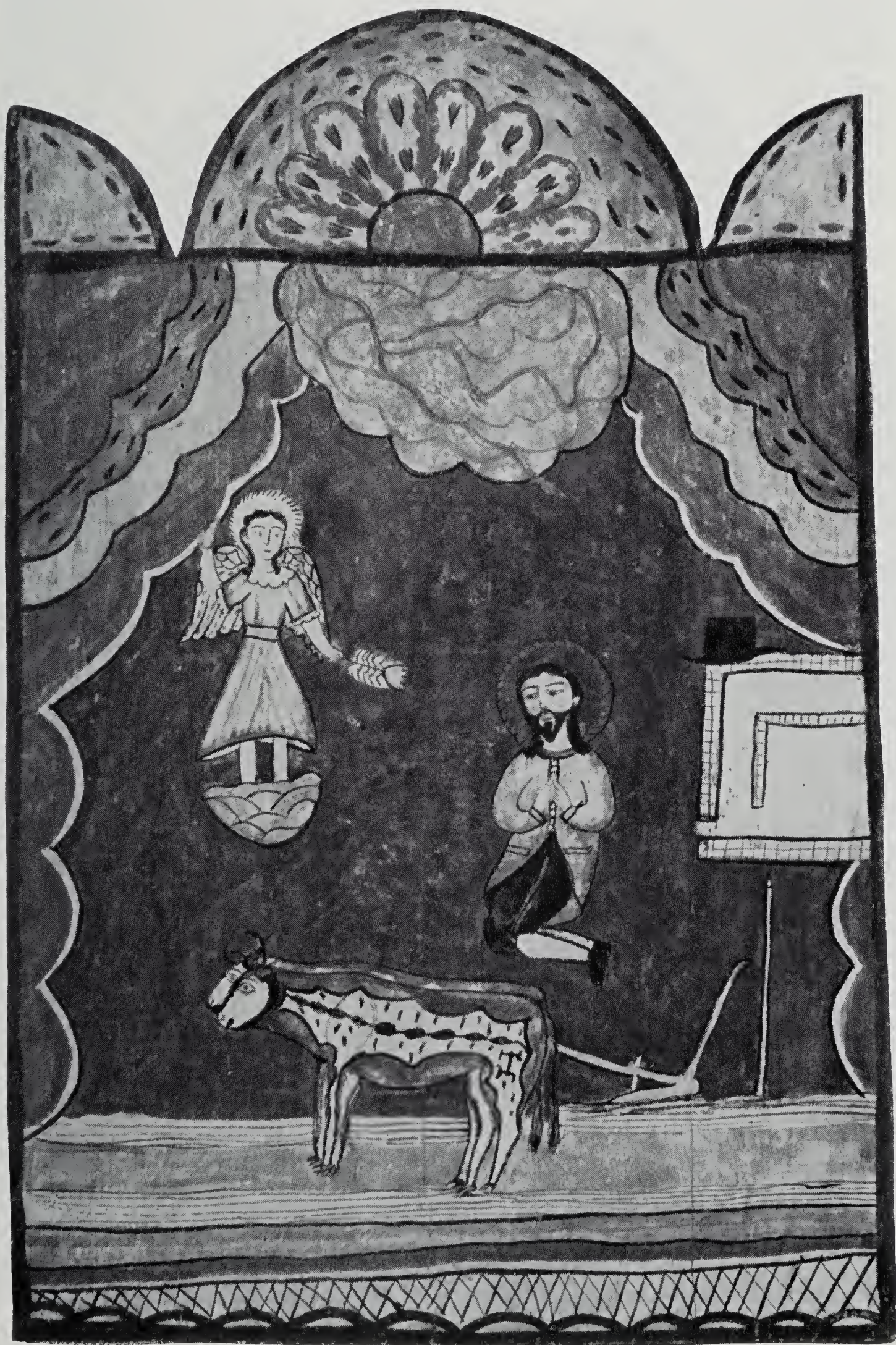
Susie Kauer (Seven years old)

Yellow Snowman
(Private Collection)—Page 63



Sienese, c. 1420

Madonna and Child
—Pages 67–68 ftn





Italo-Byzantine (Fourteenth century)

Madonna and Child
(Museum, Perugia—Photograph Scala/Alinari, New York/Florence)

—Page 68 ftn



Duccio di Buoninsegna
(Sienese—Early fourteenth century)

Madonna di Creole
(Duomo Museum, Siena)

—Photograph Scala/Alinari, New York/Florence)—Page 68 ftn



Ascribed to Ricco
(Italo-Byzantine, early sixteenth century)

Madonna and Child
(Museum of Icons, Recklinghausen,
West Germany)—Page 68 ftn



Balkan (Seventeenth century) *Madonna Hodigitria Eleousa Gruzinskaya*
(Museum of Icons, Recklinghausen, West Germany)—Page 68 ftn



Picasso

Portrait of a Baby
—Pages 73–74



Henri Rousseau

Woman with Basket of Eggs
—Pages 67 ftn, 69, 70, 74

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